

Gal. 11. K.c. 1.
P L U N G I N G *3.*

A

with Tract 6.

Subject of BIGOTRY,

When made essential to

B A P T I S M.

BIGOTRY is an excessive Fondness for a Man's own Sentiments, or standing up for this, or the other Set of Opinions, with more Conceit and Eagerness than the Reason and Importance of them require. — True Zeal is always according to Knowledge, measured by the Moments of Things, and within due Bounds: But BIGOTRY is a disproportionate Concern to the Weight of the Matter, and to the Prejudice of some other Truth.

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L O N D O N,

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ON
PLUNGING
IN
BAPTISM.



THAT man, who wisheth well to all men, whose good will and kind affections are truly *catholick*, who regards every man as a *creature* of God, and from the love he has to him that created, loves him that is created by him; every such man will feel a *painful concern* about the happiness of others, especially, when he perceives how *first principles* lose their spring and moment, by **TRIFLES** engaging the attention. Men usually fix on those things as the subjects of contentious, angry zeal, which the doctrine of Je-

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us has proposed to be the occasions of *charity*, and a suitable means of displaying the benevolent affections.

For my own part, I am of opinion, that such mistaken conduct should be freely examined, and the folly of it, as much as possible exposed.—Nor would I, whilst censuring the bigotry of another, shew a temper unworthy the christian character; being fully persuaded, that neither *sprinkling*, *pouring*, nor *plunging*, should be looked upon, as sufficient occasion of any abatement of my esteem, love, and brotherly affection. The *modes* of baptism should certainly be placed among those *indifferent* things, concerning which, all christians have the liberty either to use the one or the other. And in no one instance wherein christians may differ, has any person the *least right* to judge or censure his brother, or to despise or contemn him.

LET us not therefore judge one another any more; BUT JUDGE THIS RATHER, that no man put a *stumbling block*, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. It is very dangerous to make that *essential* or *necessary*, either to christian communion, or salvation, which the doctrine of Christ, and of his apostles have not.—

THE question before us, is, *what foundation can be discovered in scripture, for laying any stress upon PLUNGING in baptism?*—Nor is the question unreasonable or impertinent; for, it is well known,

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known, that there are numbers among us, who will have it, that CHRISTIAN BAPTISM must imply IMMERSION, understood by so plunging in water, as to cover the whole body : and that pouring, or sprinkling of water on the body, is no baptism.

BUT inasmuch as these persons must allow that the word βαπτίζω is sometimes used, nay, frequently, for *pouring* or *sprinkling* : and since they have no manner of evidence that either *John* the fore-runner, or the disciples of *Jesus*, did so *plunge* and *cover* with water, it seems wrong to lay so great a stress upon it.

THAT *John*, or the *disciples* of our Lord did plunge, is not a *clear point*, as shall be shewn from many places, where the word can intend no more than *pouring* or *sprinkling* ; and likewise from those passages which are said to prove that *Christian Baptism* expressly implies *plunging*, i. e. covering all over with water. And,

I. TAKE we notice of some of those *Texts*, which do not use the word for plunging : and they are as followeth, *Mark* viii. 4.—*And when they come from the market, except they WASH they eat not. And many other things they do, which they have received to hold, as the washing, [βαπτισμους,] of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.* In the first instance, it is not probable that they plunged themselves, and cover'd their whole bodies with water, before they eat ; — and in the

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the *latter*, tho' they might plunge their pots and cups, and brazen vessels, yet it is not likely they should plunge their *beds*; for so the word rendered tables (*χλινον*) is generally understood.—Of this *variety* of baptisms, we have mention made, *Heb. ix. 10. and divers baptisms.*—*Βαπτισμοις*—which *washings* or *baptisms* are after notified, as being only *perfusions* or *sprinklings*; see *ver. 13, 19, 21.* such as, *sprinkling* the unclean with the blood of bulls, &c. and *sprinkling* the book and the people with the blood of calves, and of goats, &c. and the tabernacle and vessels *sprinkled* with blood: these belong to the *Μαφοριαις βαπτισμοις*, the *divers washings* or *baptisms*. So that the word is evidently used for *pouring* or *sprinkling*, and cannot here either intend or allow of *plunging*.

AGAIN, we are told, *1 Cor. x. 2. that the Israelites were all batized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.* But sure none will say, *that they were all plunged.*—That was not their baptism, but the baptism of the *Egyptians*; for so *Castellio*—*obrutī sunt mari & plumbi ritu in aqua nobiles demersi*, *Exod. xv. 10.* the sea rushed in upon them, and like lead did they plunge or sink in the mighty waters!—

THE same word is used, as signifying to *tinge* or *colour* with baptizing; *Rev. xix. 13.* And he was clothed with a vesture *dipt* in blood,—*βεβαμμενον*—but even here, when one would suppose the *washing* did require most time to *stain*,
tinge

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tinge or *colour* it, it intends not plunging; but is an evident allusion to the lxiii^d of *Isaiab*, the beginning; and by a lively similitude of a *great general* returning from the slaughter of his enemies, with his garments stained, and sprinkled over with the blood of the slain; so is the *Lamb of God* described—but *generals* don't use to plunge and imbrue their garments in blood.—

IN these places, the *word* does not necessarily imply *baptism* understood as plunging: but on the contrary, it intimates baptism by *pouring*, or *sprinkling*, or *partial* washing.

To get rid of the force of this objection against plunging, it should be shewn that the word, *baptizo*, when expressing the *christian rite*, has as many places where it necessarily implies *plunging*; or, at least, it ought to be shewn, that in some *one* place it implies an *absurdity*, to understand it otherwise.—But, till this is done, let none who contend for *plunging*, boast that they have the *infallibly* right sense of the word, in their practice; and that all who differ from them, are in the wrong.

UNDER this head, I shall make a citation of what Dr. POTTER has observ'd, concerning the practice of *washing*, among the *Greeks* and *Romans*; viz. “ That the ancient *Greeks* had
“ no *Balneos* like those of later times—but had
“ a large bason or vessel to wash in—and that
“ likewise the ancient *Romans* had a vessel in
“ their

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“ their own houses, wherein they washed,
 “ call’d *lavatrina*, or *latrina*, which was after-
 “ wards termed *balneum*.—That the Greeks
 “ had, among other rooms in their *Balneos*,
 “ one called *Baptisterion*, which was an *hot*
 “ Bath; and another, *Loutron*, which was a
 “ cold Bath.”—And as to the *times* of their
 bathing; “ they usually bathed (he tells us) after
 “ war, journeyings, or any fatigue.—And that
 “ after bathing, it was the custom both in
 “ Greece and other hot countries, to ANOINT
 “ the body.” But as to their *decency* of bath-
 ing, “ in the heroical ages, men and women,
 “ without distinction, bathed themselves in
 “ rivers *”.

BUT more modest were the *primitive christ-
 ians*, says Dr. Cave, for when they were
 brought to the *font*, and were first *stripped of*
their garments (intimating thereby *their putting*
off the old man which is corrupt with his de-
ceitful lusts) and that all occasions of scandal
 and immodesty might be prevented in so sacred
 an action, the men and women were baptized
 in their distinct *apartments*, the women having
 Deaconesses to attend them, to undress and
 dress them, to stand about and *overshadow*
 them that nothing of indecency might ap-
 pear. †

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* See his *Antiq. of Greece*, Vol. ii. p. 370, 372.

† Cave’s *Prim. Christianity*. Part i. pag. 317.

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WE are next to attend to those texts of scripture on which so much stress is laid about PLUNGING in baptism.

AND all persons, even the least acquainted with the controversy, know, that the practice of *John* the Harbinger, is urg'd. It is said, *Matt. iii. 11.* that *John* baptized with water unto repentance, but that the *Messias* should baptize with the *Holy Spirit and fire*. Compare *Mark i. 8.* *Luke iii. 16.* *John i. 33.* All which texts agree in their description of this doctrine of *John's*, and of our Lord's baptism. Now, if baptizing, when applied to *John*, necessarily signified plunging over head in water, and covering the whole body; what must the word import, when applied to our Lord's baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire?—Must we in the one case suppose covering *all over* with water, necessary, as the cleansing rite: and not suppose that the *other* method of purification should be alike extensive?—but, it was certainly sufficient that the Holy Spirit descending like an hovering flame upon Jesus, and upon the heads of the apostles and first christians, was all the apparent or external application or symbol, which mark'd out the *separated* persons. And why should not *pouring* water on the head of our Lord by *John* the Baptist, determine *John's* baptism to be *valid*, as well as our Lord's only *sprinkling* with the Spirit, or, by an effusion of pointed flame on the heads of his apostles

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and witnesses of his resurrection, for this reason be called, a *baptism*; and be esteemed valid; tho' he did not *dip* or *plunge* men over head in the Spirit?—An unprejudic'd mind will find it very difficult to discern the reason of such difference. But if we were to look for ANALOGY, or resemblance between *John's* applying water, and the visible token of the Spirit *coming* upon *Jesus*, we should be inclined to conclude, that *John* had not plunged *Jesus*, but only poured water upon his head, to which the dove-like descent or pouring of the Spirit answered.—The *fondness* those Gentlemen shew for *analogy*, in mode, will vindicate such an interpretation in the case before us, and shew it to be, at least, *argumentum ad hominem*.

As to *John's* chusing to baptize in *Enon*, because *there was much water*, *John* iii. 23. this does not seem to carry any thing in it that will be *conclusive* on the side of dipping, or plunging.—It may be otherways accounted for, as, there being *many waters*, streams, or rivulets, would render it more convenient and commodious for *John* and his disciples; forasmuch as thereby they had it in their power to be *all* employed in baptizing the crowds who came from *Jerusalem*, and the country around them. And as to the *much*, or *great*, or *deep* water, if we consider whereabouts it was that *John* baptized, or if we regard the wilderness of *Judah*, as dry and thirsty, *Psal.* lxiii. 1. *i. e.* not

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not very well stored with waters, it will follow, that whatever the wilderness was where *John* baptized, the *much*, or *great*, or *deep* may be understood in a *comparative* view, and will afford us nothing conclusive. But suppose (for supposition sake) that the *υδατα πολλα*, intended to hint to us the *depth* of the waters, or intended a *large* river, like the *Euphrates*; or should we stretch our imagination so far, as to think it might intimate the *roaring of an high sea*, as in other places *, we should only by this means render it more difficult to account for their *safety* in going into it; and for their capacity of performing the *religious rite*, when in it.—

BESIDES, tho' the waters of *Enon* were allowedly deep enough for *plunging*, and large enough to accommodate the crowds that came to be wash'd in them; is it not strange, that no *hint* should ever be *once* let fall, that might inform us whether the baptized *quitted* their clothes, or went in with them on.—Surprising! that not one word should ever express or intimate that they were actually *plunged*; or that they were plunged *naked*, or in *garments*.—If they were not plunged, but only stepped into the rivulet, in order to have some water poured upon them, there is no difficulty would arise from this *silence*; because we are inform'd of the nature of their *dress*, which would easily admit of such practice without much trouble, or inconvenience.

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* *Dr. Doddridge's Fam. Expos. Vol. i. pag. 159.*

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NOR should any say, that this is too mean a circumstance to be taken notice of, for the *decency* or *indecenty* of the rite would depend upon it, if *plunging*, and especially *plunging naked* † was essential to christian baptism.

UNDER this head, which respects mens uneasy scruples about the *quantity* of water; we might expect that the *tender conscience* should be as much, nay *more* solicitous about its *quality*, that is to say, whether it should be *hard* or *soft*, *fresh* or *salt*, *spring* or *pond*, *river* or *sea* water.——

IT is not sufficient that *John* baptized in *Enon*, where were much or many waters, unless we know the *quality* of them. They might be running waters or standing pools: or they might be *wells* that had been sunk there for the convenience of cattle. And if the *many* or *much* waters should allude to the roaring of an high sea, they might be *salt* waters.

BUT in reply, it may be said, that the *Jayler* could not be suppos'd to have any *salt* or *sea* water in his house; and therefore, we may suppose that it was *fresh* water. Grant it; it does not yet appear whether it was *running* or *standing* water that he had laid in, any more than what quantity. And methinks if either quality or quantity was of importance, one would have expected

† Cave's Prim. Christianity. P. i. pag. 317. as before.

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expected much clearer hints concerning the *quality*; because, this seems to deserve in its own nature a *first* regard: for supposing a man would apply an instituted baptismal *rite* as a symbol of purity, and was so situated that he could not have water sufficient to *plunge*, but what was foul and muddy, as from standing and unwholsome lakes; and he could, at the same time, be able to come at a clear and sweet spring, that would admit of his applying the pure element only by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, any stander-by would be able to discern the *aptness* of the *latter* symbol in a light much preferable to the *former*.

BUT, that neither *quantity* nor *quality* is essential to christian baptism, is deducible from the *silence* of the sacred historians: for even *Lydia* herself and her household, tho' baptized after prayer by the river-side, are not said to have gone into it, or to have been plung'd in it. Nay, their *not being said to have gone into it*, probably may intimate that it was a *deep* river, and not so fit for baptism as the many waters, or rivulets, or wells, where *John* baptized.—The *mark* or *note* of plunging, from *their going down into the water, and coming up out of it*, is quite lost in the case of *Lydia*, and the instance of the *Jayler* will only suffer a warm imagination to invent plunging.

BUT I proceed to consider the strength of some of their chief fortresses.—And the greatest stress

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stress seems to be laid on the *two* following passages of scripture, *Rom. vi. 3, 4.* and *Col. ii. 12.*—The *first* is, *Rom. vi. 3, 4. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death? therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

BAPTIZING into Christ, all must allow to be a *figure*, and to intend no more than baptizing into an open profession of his doctrine: but the author of it having been crucified, the doctrine which the apostles and first christians professed, was that of a *crucified Jesus*. For *grace*, or *favour*, reigneth thro' righteousness unto eternal life, by this crucified Jesus; tho' *sin*, or the *one offence* had reigned unto death, see *chap. v. 9, 10, 12* and *21 ver. compared. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; i. e. into this doctrine of the cross*. But what was this? see *ver. 10. In that he died, he died unto sin once*. Now, *sin* had no manner of place in him, stripped of a figure: but his dying unto *sin once*, must intend his willing subjection to the curse of that *positive* law, *in the day thou eatest, &c.* which had denounced death upon the humane family. *Death* was not imposed on him as a *demerit*, but as the body which he took upon him was humane, and so capable of *mortality*, he, agreeable to his mission, gave up his life a sacrifice to the
sin

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sin and rage of men; *he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.* And the privilege we are initiated into, by baptism, shews us a most reconciling view of our perilous state; since death is destroyed by his dying once, or, once submitting to death; *for in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*—And if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we SHALL also be in the likeness of his resurrection, ver. 5. That this cannot intend any resemblance from the baptismal water, seems evident; because, then it would have been rendered, we also have been in the likeness of his resurrection, when rising out of the water, and not we also shall be.—

THE being planted in the likeness of his death, don't seem to intend the being plunged in water, as such plunging bears no resemblance to his death, or crucifixion; for there, the blood which came from his head, hands, feet, and side, did not imbrue his whole body, or cover it, as a body immersed or plunged in water. Nor does a likeness of his resurrection stand imag'd by the rising out of the water. It evidently refers to what is future, and has for its antecedent *our* (the apostles) so being planted together in the likeness of his death, as to be interested in the atonement, to be justified by his blood. Knowing this, that our OLD man, (or this animal life) is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead, is freed

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freed from sin; which expressions seem to refer to *our* (the apostle's) being secure of life, tho' the body must be dissolved. And, notwithstanding *our being dead with Christ*, subject to die once as well as Christ, yet *we are assured of life with him*; forasmuch, as he being raised from the dead, *dieth no more*; death has no more dominion over him. And tho' this mortal BODY of ours must be destroyed, yet, henceforth, (*numeri, non amplius,*) yet no more shall we be subject to its dominion; when like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also shall walk in newness of life, ver. 4.

APPLYING the phrase, *walk in newness of life*, to a future state of existence, I imagine, may be defended, from its being the only state in which we can resemble Christ, considered as *raised from the dead by the glory of the Father*. And if we keep our eye upon *sin still reigning to death*, ch. v. ver. 21. notwithstanding the abounding grace of God in *Jesus*; we may then understand the question directly put upon this, ch. vi. ver. 1. to have respect to *sin's reigning unto death*; and, consequently, we may look upon St. Paul as using a metonymy, putting the cause for the effect, *sin* for *death*: hereupon the question will be understood thus; *shall we continue under the reign of sin, under death, that grace may abound? far from it; this is every way inconsistent: some of us are dead to sin, how after this shall we live in it? or, be under its dominion.* And the manner

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net of our being dead to sin, ye know; viz. our being [emphatically] *baptized into Christ's death.*

If this rendring be just, then *the walking in newness of life*, would fitly be expressive of the *after-state*, or of a resurrection from the dead, in resemblance of Christ's *being raised from the dead, by the glory of the Father.*

I HAVE found the word, *newness*, but twice used in the New Testament, i. e. here, and chap. vii. 6. There it is joined to Spirit, *newness of Spirit*, and refers to their being dead to the *Mosaic law*, as become the subjects of a *new constitution*.—No impropriety then appears in St. Paul's expressing himself thus, with reference to the *state* he should be in, *when raised up from the dead, like to his Lord*: forasmuch, as his walking in *newness of life*, would suit the *restitution* or re-creating of all things, the *new body*, the *resurrection body*, and the *new heavens and new earth* in which dwells righteousness.—

BESIDES, *ver. 15.* seems to shew, that the question put, *ver. 1.* refers to our (the Apostle's) subjection to death, rather than to his continuing the *slave of sin*, or vice. And this sense may be confirm'd from *ver. 14.* for he had declared, that sin should not have dominion over the converts, no more than over him, because *they were not under the law but*

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under grace. Upon the mention of which, he fees a *perverse* question arising in their minds, viz. Whether this would be a *toleration* or *license* for their *sinning*? and he answers, *far from it.*—

He must then in this former part of the chapter, have *death*, and not *transgression* in view; and *security* from death, as obtain'd by the *death* and *resurrection* of Jesus; or, his argument through the whole chapter will seem very *indistinct* and *confused.*—

Thus the apostle appears, to me, to be describing the *high advantages* secured to the christian, who has embraced the doctrine of his Lord, whom he before has been placing in contrast with the first *Adam*; and therein shewn, that the benefits *confer'd* by Jesus, are of an infinitely superior nature, to those *lost* by the first *Adam*. So that although the questions are put, ver. 1, 2. viz. *Whether we shall continue in sin, that grace may abound? And how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?* Yet, if understood of vice, the direct answer to these questions appears not to take place, till ver. 11, 12. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof.*—But if from ver. 3. to ver. 11. be understood as an immediate answer to the questions

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tions put, *ver.* 1, 2. the sense and reasoning will perhaps be plain and intelligible, should we apply the paragraph *to the apostles*, who were, in an high sense, *baptized into Christ's death!* as may be illustrated from such passages as these, *Matth.* xx. 23. *Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.*—In which sort of baptisms, *St. Paul* says, he had often been; *in deaths often,* 2 *Cor.* xi. 23.—*I die daily,* 1 *Cor.* xv. 31. And how many converts to Christianity (says *Dr. S. Clarke*) in the primitive ages, before they could be baptized, were carried immediately to *martyrdom?* yet no one doubted, but their dying *literally* with and for Christ, was more than equivalent to their being *figuratively* buried with him by baptism into death.—*Serm.* Vol. vii. pag. 253.

BUT upon the *custom* and *practice* of, the primitive ages, subsequent to the apostles, I lay no stress.—

SUFFERINGS and *death* for the cause of Christ were a proper *baptism*, as the efficacy of Christ's doctrine was very significantly *exhibited* by such death and sufferings.

BESIDES, there seems to be a great agreement between the reasoning of *St. Paul* here, and in that xvth of 1st *Cor.* There, he had been asserting the foundation of the christian's hopes of a resurrection to eternal life, upon

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Christ's being *risen*, and become the *first fruits* of them that sleep; and *that since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead*; that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, ver. 20, 21, 22. And then he takes notice of the *exaltation* of Jesus: but at ver. 29. he draws this inference; *else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?* and in ver. 31, 32. he mentions his own perils. After that, he expatiates upon the nature of the resurrection; and concludes the chapter with an exhortation to his *brethren*, to be steadfast.—A *parallel* to this, we have in Rom. v. and vi.—We are then to consider St. Paul, as having, in chap. v. represented Adam and Christ in contrast, and shewed the great advantage that the *mediation* of Jesus introduced; — and in chap. vi. representing the *certainty* of the doctrine, as built upon the resurrection of Jesus, and his *dying no more*. Hence, it is not at all *unnatural* for him to mention himself, as being *buried* with Christ in baptism; and to keep in his eye the *security* of immortal life which he had through him,—and *after this*, to enforce the doctrine upon christians.

NOR can we suppose St. Paul to have laid any manner of stress upon the *mode* of water-baptism here; since we find him, 1 Cor. i, 14:
and

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and onward, glorying, that had he baptized but few; and that baptism was of small importance compared with the preaching of the gospel; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

THE other passage of Scripture on which so much stress is laid, is, Col. ii. 12. *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

HERE the advocates for plunging would have it, that this must refer to the rite of water-baptism; to our being covered with water, or buried with him in it; and to our rising again out of it, as answering to his resurrection. But the *wherein also*, is not just; for the same phrase is rendred, ver. 11. *In whom also, $\epsilon\nu \ \epsilon\ \nu$ —In whom also you are risen together; and the burying with him*, confirms this rendring. So that if we attend to the argument, it can intend no more than that by baptism, they professed to embrace the christian doctrine, and to renounce Judaism, and all pagan and idolatrous rites and customs; for the twentieth verse is a comment upon this; *if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world—this is the being buried with him*. But it cannot refer to the rite of water-baptism, intimating, as some would have it, a plunging or covering over with water, as Christ was by John in Jordan. For, it is not probable that

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that *John* did plunge our Lord; but if he did, and that this was the custom of the *Jews*, in their *baptism*, yet this *burying with Christ in baptism*, can by no means refer to that *resemblance* of him; for, he remain'd a *conformist* to Judaism in many respects till he had fulfilled his ministry; and the *hand-writing of ordinances*, he took not out of the way, till he nailed them to his *cross*! so that being *dead with him* from the *rudiments of the world*, or being *buried with him* in baptism, as it here respects an absolute freedom from all the carnal ordinances of *Jew* or *Gentile*, must have reference to the death or cross of *Christ*. And *baptism* being the external sign of mens acknowledging his doctrine and mission, would presuppose and include their being dead with him to these rudiments, tho' they had no more than a *small* quantity of water applied by *infusion*, *asperision*, or *pouring*.

FARTHER, if *plunging* in water must be understood in these places; I should ask, who we have now that are the *proper subjects* of baptism? none, unless they be *Jews*, who throw off Judaism; or *Gentiles*, who renounce idolatry; or men, who have lived under the *dominion* of sin. Men cannot, with any propriety, be *plunged* in order to shew their being *dead* and *buried* from that they never indulged, embraced, or submitted to; and how they can be *buried with Christ* from sin, or from the *Mosaic* law, in baptism, I know not.

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The blessed Jesus was without spot, and had no guile. And the Jewish ordinances he died not unto at his baptism, they were nailed to his cross, and blotted out there, not by *immersion*, but rather by *aspersion*.—

FARTHER, as the word *baptizo*, is capable of different senses, and has been differently applied by the *sacred writers* themselves, we might reasonably have expected some *expletive*, that should have fasten'd down the sense to *plunging*: so that when used concerning the *christian rite* of water-baptism, none might by the ambiguity of the word, be led into any doubt concerning it. And certainly if the thing had been of *importance*, this would have been done. But as the strong term of *burying*, very probably, has no reference to water-baptism, when annexed to the word *baptisma*, it will by no means lend us any *aid* in determining its signification, on the side of *plunging*.

NAY, should we imagine that the word there intended *plunging*, we should be difficultly set to find out the *moral* or *spiritual* meaning of the mode. For as applied now, few *Jews* renounce Judaism, or are plung'd. Many, I doubt not among christians that are plung'd, have had no habits of vice to renounce; have no *new* religion to make a public profession of, and openly to embrace,
but

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but have been all their days *putting on Christ*, without making provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts. How these are *buried* with Christ in baptism, to sin, and how they rise in it to *newness* of life, is difficult to discover. They have had no *putting off* the old man, with his deeds, which are corrupt.——And if we should understand it as referring to the doctrine of a *dead* and *risen* Jesus, our being plung'd in water has no manner of resemblance with it. The manner of his descending into *Hades* seems to have nothing in it *imitable* by us; unless our actual dissolution be. Nor can *rising out of the water* convey any *similar* idea to his resurrection, the *manner* or *modus* of which, was *bid* from the observation of all men.

THE most then, that can possibly be made of these *texts*, as supposing the practice of *plunging*, is, that if they do respect *water-baptism*, they are nothing more than an ALLUSION to that *mode* of dipping or plunging. They enter not into the *nature* of an INSTITUTION; but only express the *manner* in which they baptized, in those hot countries.——They can intend no more, for even where the *order* is given for the disciples to *go and baptize*, not one word is said about *all* nations being *dipped* or *plunged*; nor that any *one* nation should; no, nor any *one* person. *Families*, we find, whole *households* baptized together. One household baptized in
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On Plunging in Baptism. 25

their own house ; but no *quantity* of water mentioned.—But should we understand the *burying with Christ in baptism*, Rom vi. to refer to St. Paul in his own person, as it seems probable it must be so refer'd, then we should expect to have had some account of his having been plung'd himself, *Acts* ix. 18. at his baptism : whereas we have not *one word* about it, nor of his going out of the house of *Judas* to receive his baptism, in his weak and infirm condition.—

ONCE more ; should we grant that the christian baptismal rite was administred by *plunging* ; as this *mode* of the *rite* would be suitable to an hot climate ; it will not thence follow, that 'tis suitable to a cold one. None will pretend that a *rite* can lose the *nature of a rite*. And if it cannot, then *the change of circumstances*, will render it *fit* or *unfit*. Instances of which sort of rites the Jewish state abounded with.—Their washings, and purifications, numbers of them, would have had no fitness or suitability in them in a cold climate.—They were *local*, tho' positive institutions, and tended to their health ; preserving them more free from infectious distempers. — But as great care was taken, by their laws, to preserve modesty and chastity of body among them, as well as cleanliness and health, we cannot suppose that their *bathings* were promiscuous. So that

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the difficulty will recoil upon us, if we imagine that the *crowds* of the first converts were *dipped*, or *plunged* in baptism. For, inasmuch as we have no account of women baptizing of the women, and of men baptizing only the men, it would have brought an early reproach upon the christian *rite*, if *plunging* had been the practice.

LEST it should be thought that *Tit.* iii. 5. was wilfully pass'd over, because of its weight, I shall add it here;—according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration. *ἄλσιν*, *lavacrum*, if strictly rendered, should be the *washing-place* of regeneration, or the *bath* of regeneration. But who sees not that here the figure is exceedingly high.—The PLACE wherein we are washed, does not surely, in any proper sense, contribute to our salvation. If it did, then there would be a *material* cause producing an *immaterial* and spiritual effect.—The *Romanists* have indeed shewn us, in many astonishing instances, to what extravagancies our laying stress on *modes* and *rituals* may carry us.—

THUS the texts lie, in my view; if I mistake them, it is after some pains taken to understand the true sense of them; nor would my mistaking their direct sense help the argument, for, as I have already observed,

On Plunging in Baptism. 27

served, should they allude to the *mode* of baptism; they will conclude nothing farther, than that plunging in baptism was used in an hot country. They can no way recommend or enforce the *mode* upon us,—— unless it could be proved that a greater *quantity* of water makes a stronger impression upon the *moral temper* of the mind, and has a greater aptitude to make men *die to sin, and live to God*, than a lesser quantity of water has. —

MOREOVER, here might be subjoined a *presumptive* argument against plunging; and that is, that since plunging was *common* to bathing, it is not probable that it should be adopted as the *mode* of a *sacred rite*. We know that eating bread and drinking wine, in the common *usage* of it, *i. e.* so as to make a meal, or to satisfy hunger and thirst, was not permitted in the other *christian rite*, but looked upon by St. Paul as a *profanation* of the Supper; 1 Cor. xi. 20, 21, 22. And if *analogy* might here take place, then to plunge in baptism would be no other than a *profane use* of water; it having been the *common way* of bathing.— This argument against plunging, seems to have as firm a *basis*, as most, if not all that are brought for it: none of them rising much, if any, above presumption.—

BUT it is farther said, by the advocates for plunging, *that going down into the water, and coming up out of the water, do imply*

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immersion, *Acts* viii. 38, 39. — Was this the case; it would prove *too much*; for both *Philip* and the *Eunuch*, are said to do so: and if it implies *plunging*, then *Philip* was plung'd as well as the *Eunuch*. But there being nothing that will account for the fitness of *Philip's* being plung'd, we must not imagine that *going down into the water*, and *coming up out of it*, are expressions which intimate plunging.

BESIDES, the prepositions *in* and *ex*, rendered *into*, and *out of*, are as justly rendered *to*, and *from*. Tho', allowing that the country was a land of hills, and of valleys, and that the springs run among the valleys, *Deut.* xi. 11. *Psal.* civ. 10. it is a very natural rendring, *going down to*, and *coming up from*, or *out of*.

ADD we to this, that the circumstance of *dipping* or *plunging*, don't appear to have the advantage of *pouring* or *sprinkling* in the sacred text. Nor is *one* or the *other* form or mode at all essential to *baptism*, consider'd as a *christian rite*, neither is it probable it should have any force given it, forasmuch as the other christian rite, *viz.* the *Lord's Supper*, is left to be *discretionally* administred; no *form* or *posture* of administration being appointed — unless, we make the *posture* of our Lord, and of his apostles essential, as an *authoritative precedent*; and then, I question, whether

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whether any part of the christian church has the *essentials* of that ordinance. For it is generally agreed to have been instituted in a *reclining* posture; our Lord and his disciples *leaning upon each other*. But—why men should take the liberty of differing from our Lord in the method and form of celebrating *one* positive rite, without making any the least difficulty of it; and yet make the circumstances of the *other* to give the very *essence* of the *rite*, is very unaccountable.—It cannot be pretended, that baptism is a *more solemn* ordinance than the *supper*; —most, if not all christians have agreed to carry *the Eucharist* rather beyond *, than to leave it so much upon a *level* with baptism. Of those who are the most earnest and solicitous to make important the *modes* of baptism, some of them have *taken great liberties* in their celebration of the Eucharist.—And as to the *posture*; none of them, I believe, make a conscience of reclining on *squabbs* or *beds* when receiving the elements. —

BESIDES, it is remarkable in the institution of the *Eucharist*, that the *quantity* either of bread or wine is not specified; what reason then have we to imagine that the *quantity* of water applied in baptism, shou'd be determin'd as of importance, [when not *one word*

* *With what reason I do not here enquire.*

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word has been said about it in all the sacred writings,] any more than that the quantity of bread and wine, should be discretionally left to communicants?—

BUT *if after all*, it should be granted, that possibly the apostles baptized by *immersion*; since this is not any where, either by express account, or by indubitable consequence, the *voice of revelation*, that they did; *much less*, since there is not any stress at all laid upon it, it appears no way incumbent on us, who live in a *different climate*, and cloth after a *different manner*, that we should practise *immersion*.—It cannot become our duty, unless it was a matter of *clear revelation*. For nothing can demand our conformity to it, as the appointment, or as the will of Christ, but what the revelation makes plain to be so.

IT will therefore be greatly injurious to the *credit*, and *dignity* of the REVELATION should we suppose that the *mode* must be necessary and essential to baptism; even so essential as that the *validity* of it is destroyed by the want of plunging.—Had this been the case, and that any important consequences depended upon it, it would express *great defect* either of wisdom or faithfulness, or of both, not only in the apostles, but in our Lord himself.—On the contrary, it
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On Plunging in Baptism. 31

is *certain*, that there is no one place, which has laid any weight upon it; nay, so far from any thing being built upon it, it has no *plain* and *evident* foundation in all the Holy Scriptures. And in cool thought and reflection, such *persons* must see great reason for abating their zeal, who have ventured to make the *want of baptism itself in any form a damnable sin*: forasmuch as such exceed the sentence pronounc'd by the SON OF GOD, Mark xvi. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* Not a syllable of the want of baptism, as the reason of damnation.—And wisely has our Lord left out the *baptismal rite* in the denunciation; yea, and very friendly too, to great numbers of professors among *plunging Baptists*, who have died out of this world, *believers in Christ*, and yet have remained unbaptized. For, I doubt not, but many thousands have received Christ, and his words, who have never *been* able to discern the importance of water-baptism; persons, who have been taught superstitiously, to apply ideas to it, which in the nature of things, never did, never can belong to it.

IT is yet a thing *unprov'd*, that the apostles of our Lord were ever baptized with any baptism, except that of *John*. Tho' it is probable, that several of them had received

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ceived that; of some, it is manifest that they had been *John's* disciples, *John* i. 37. Of *Matthew* indeed we have no traces, that I can find, of his having been a disciple of *John's*. Our Lord *called* him, when sitting at the *receipt of custom*, *Mark* ix. 9. And in chap. x. 3. we find him *numbred* among the *twelve apostles*, without any intervening account of his baptism, or any intimations of his having been a *disciple* of the Baptist. Moreover, it is never said that our Lord baptized any with water, unless *John* iii. 12. should be so understood. But when we compare chap. iv. 2. we find no way of reconciling these places, but by understanding the former passage, either of our Lord's baptizing with the Spirit, or of his continuing with his disciples in *Judea*, whilst they baptized with water.—

IT was perhaps sufficient, and answered all the ends of baptism, that the apostles of our Lord constantly attended him, and openly professed their adherence to him. As this had the *moral design* of baptism contained in it.—

BESIDES, baptism is not essential to mens being disciples of Jesus, for we have instances upon record of men being *believers in Christ*, and receiving the *gifts of the Spirit*, to whom christian baptism *had never* been applied, *Acts* x. 44.—But who dare

On Plunging in Baptism. 33

dare be so presumptuous, as to say, that had these died before the baptismal water had been applied, they would have been damned? — or that the baptismal water would have secured their salvation?

THE RITE, if understood rightly, does not purify the subject with regard to God or Jesus; but is primarily designed to affect and influence others. In the early ages, it was (applied to adult persons) to be a public and open acknowledgment of mens believing the gospel.——

UPON *the whole*, How dangerous a part do those persons act, who upon such unwarranted foundations make *plunging* essential to baptism: and not only so, but make baptism by plunging essential to salvation! — It is very dangerous to *narrow* or *enlarge* the foundation laid by Christ. The apostles themselves never had authority to do it; they durst not preach up any thing as *essential*, that Christ had not declared to be so. Nor do I know of any one principle of faith that is fundamental, or requisite to denominate a man a *christian*, more than that, of believing that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, or that he is *the sent of God*. 1 John iv. 2. *Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.*

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NOR of any thing that is fundamental in practice, in order to salvation, but that of forming the temper and conduct by the doctrine and example of our Lord. — *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them,* John xiii. 17.

THESE may be built upon, as *fundamentals*, though men differ about RITES; their *modes* and *forms* of being administered; especially, when no explicate rule or canon is delivered about them.

HE is to all intents and purposes a *christian*, and entitled to salvation, who wanders not from the *rule*; who makes nothing binding, that the gospel has not made binding, and nothing *loosing* which the gospel has not made *loosing*. Though he should imagine *plunging* preferable to pouring; or *pouring* preferable to plunging.—

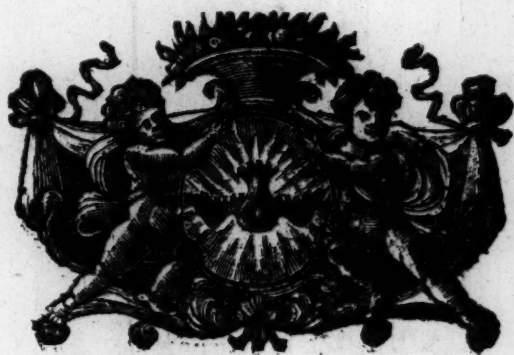
BUT whoever, in either case, is so bigoted, as to make his *mode* essential, has thereby deviated from the gospel rule; has brought in *offences*; has introduced *uncharitableness*; and lies exposed hereupon to a terrible ANATHEMA! forasmuch, as he cannot be a true christian, who saps and destroys the Spirit of the religion of Jesus; which is CHARITY. And he may be assured, that that principle

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principle or practice *in* and *about* which good men may and do differ, cannot possibly enter into the essence of *truth* or *piety*.——

BUT, by the law of charity, we may judge there are *fifty* to *one* among us of good men, who have not thought plunging at all requisite or essential to baptism; *ergo*, ——

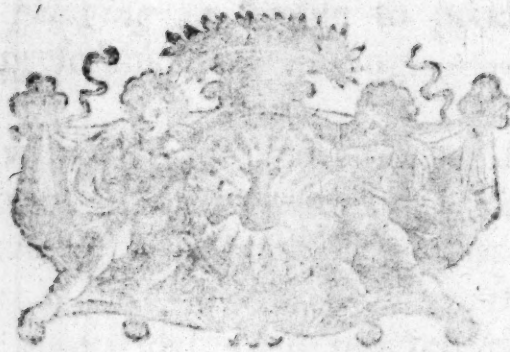
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principle or practice in and about which
good men may and do differ; cannot pos-
sibly enter into the essence of truth or
piety.

But, by the law of charity, we may
judge there are many things of
good men, who have not thought plunging
at all requisite or essential to baptism;
ergo,

F I W I S.



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WHEREIN

That famous Apologist, Mr. ROBERT BARCLAY's first Principle, which denies WATER-BAPTISM, is refuted.—The Reverend Mr. T. EMLYN's *previous Question* is largely consider'd;—what St. PAUL means by the Children of Christians being *holy*,—and what St. PETER, by Baptism now *saving* us;—the most *plausible Objections* to the baptizing of Infants, impleaded;—*Adult-Baptizers* have neither *Precept* nor *Precedent* in the New Testament to support their Practice;—Christian Parents encouraged to baptize their Infant-Offspring;—some proper Reflections upon the *Use* and *Abuse* of the Rite.

—Επει αρα τα τεκνα υμων αχαρακτα εσι· νυν δε αγια εσι·

Pauli ad Corinth. i Epist. vii. 14.

L O N D O N,

Printed for T. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-Noster-Row*, 1742.



The general SCHEME.

§ I. **W**ater-Baptism found to be a christian rite, and not superseded by the Spirit. Against Mr. ROBERT BARCLAY's principle.

§ II. Water-Baptism has no renovating, saving efficacy, but in adult persons is expressive of an open declaration of their belief in the christian doctrine.

§ III. Did not qualify for the miraculous impartments, but sometimes preceded, and sometimes followed them.

§ IV. Baptism had a moral sense, and imported resignation to sufferings.

§ V. It was expressive of immunity or privilege, as it manumitted the baptized Jews from the Mosaic law.

§ VI. The most universal sense, a symbol of purity.

§ VII. The Reverend Mr. THOMAS EMLYN's previous Question consider'd.—

§ VIII. The 1 Cor. vii. 14. consider'd, under which is shewn, what we may understand, by the child of a believing parent being HOLY.

What followeth these Sections, is chiefly answers to twelve Objections.

Obj. I. That the Abrahamic covenant, and the circumcising of infants under it, or the baptizing of the children of Profelytes, are no evidences

dences in favour of infant-baptism ; since it is not proved, that baptism is in the place of circumcision.—

Obj. II. *Infants are not capable subjects of baptism, since the original commission of our Lord's, is, first to teach or disciple, and after that to baptize.*

Obj. III. *There is an express mention made in the New Testament of adult persons being baptized, but an entire silence concerning the baptism of infants ; since therefore there is neither precept nor precedent in this case, it will follow, that to baptize infants, is to be wise above what is written.*

Obj. IV. *Baptism is of very considerable importance in the affair of mens salvation, as it is recommended in the writings of the New Testament, Mark xvi. 16. Acts xvi. 31. ch. ii. 38. Hence it cannot, with any propriety, be applied to infants, they being incapable of understanding any thing about it.*

Obj. V. *But infants are innocent, pure, and holy ; and therefore have no need of washing ; and baptism must therefore be very impertinently applied to them.*

Obj. VI. *Others object, that to represent children as pure and holy, or innocent, is to deny the truth ; for they are all born in original sin, and are all, by nature, children of wrath ; and therefore, baptism should be applied to them, as the laver of regeneration.—That baptism hereupon, must have a regenerating efficacy ; the water being sanctified to the mystical washing away of*
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of sin, as well as its being a rite, by which the infant is incorporated into the body of Christ's church.

Obj. VII. Mr. BARCLAY attempts to destroy the doctrine of Water-Baptism, from 1 Pet. iii. 21. viz. because water cannot purify farther than the flesh.—

Obj. VIII. Mr. BARCLAY has also attempted to destroy Water-Baptism, from 1 Cor. i. 14, 17. viz. the apostles not being sent to baptize.—

Obj. IX. Is from Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11. and Rom. ii. 28, 29. which supposes, that the spirituality of the christian dispensation, will admit of no positive, external rite.

Obj. X. The modern Deist, who is for rejecting revelation, and being absolutely guided by the light of nature, may perhaps object, that to use the external rite of baptism, in a religious sense, is inconsistent with the pure documents of reason, or the light of nature.

Obj. XI. Altho' baptism might possibly become a moral mean, to an adult person, yet we see not how it can affect an infant. For, supposing it to die in infancy without baptism, it is a mere jest to imagine, that it will be worse treated by the universal Father, than if it had been baptized; for the omission of baptism was no matter of blame in the infant.

I. Encouragement, added to the above arguments, for christian parents baptizing their infants, is, those kind expressions and notices which the author of our religion shewed to infants.

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II. *St. Peter's declaration, Acts ii. 39. The promise being made to the children of the Jewish converts, as well as to them; which would have excited their prejudices, if the initiating rite had been denied their children.*

Obj. XII. *The christian doctrine was not calculated to indulge mens prejudices, but to combat them;—and John the Baptist has actually combated this prejudice of the Jews about their infants being baptized, Matth. iii. 9.*

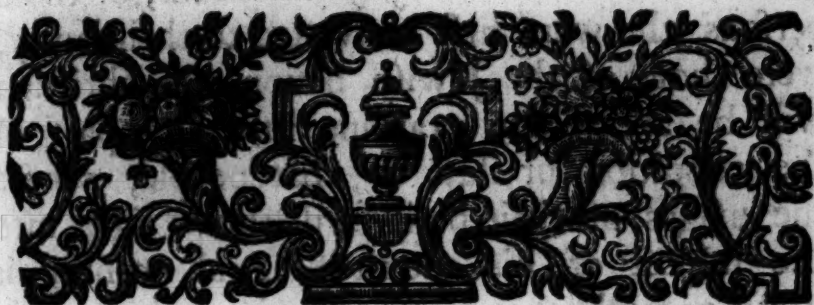
III. *Encouragement to infant-baptism, is grounded on Eph. vi. 4. viz. christian parents being commanded to educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—*

IV. *Encouragement which professing christians have to baptize their offspring, is, their being actually concerned in the doctrine of remission, or, in the efficacy of Christ's death.*

V. *The conduct is fit and reasonable; for the church of Christ would not be visible, if no external rites or marks of it were allowed. But all good societies merely humane, as well as all divine constitutions, since God had a distinguished people or church in the world, have consider'd infants as belonging to their communities, and have admitted them under such or such qualifications: so that the baptism of infants is in perfect conformity to the measures and rules of all good government, therefore fit and becoming.*

Lastly, Some proper reflections upon the use and abuse of the rite.

A P L E A



A

PLEA for INFANTS:

OR, THE

Scripture Doctrine of WATER-BAPTISM.



DOES any man give into the observance of a religious *rite*? it is highly reasonable, that he should carefully examine into the foundation upon which such *rite* is supported. Is there a *rite* said to be observed by christians? what is the authority on which they ground their observance of it? This will be an enquiry very becoming those who use *Water-Baptism*; viz. how the *rite* stands supported in the writings of the *New Testament*.

THESE writings are indeed the only proper directory to a christian, or they are the most

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plain and infallible rule of his conduct—nevertheless, inasmuch as the *first christians*, or those persons who were first converted to christianity, were those of the Jewish nation, the christian will be allowed to examine into any part of the condition or state of that people, where the usages of their polity will throw light into the subject of his enquiry. And nothing is more natural, than to enquire how this people can be supposed to bear the change of their *rites*.

§ I. SHOULD we ask what it is that warrants the use of Water-Baptism, as a *religious rite*, among christians?—It will be told us, that *John*, the harbinger of Jesus, who came before him to prepare the way for the introduction of his kingdom, did indeed come baptizing with water unto repentance: but, having no symbols of miraculous power to attest or recommend his ministry, he declares, that he who came after him, should baptize *with the Holy Spirit and with fire*, *Matth. iii. 11.* which we afterwards find was the *only way* in which Jesus did ever baptize, as may be learnt from *John iv. 2.* compared with *ch. xx, 22.*—unless that baptism he applied to the feet of his disciples, *ch. xiii. begin.*—So that our Lord's baptizing with *the Holy Spirit and with fire*, may refer to the power he gave to his disciples of working miracles, during his ministry among them; and to those amazing impartments of the Spirit at *Pentecost*, which were made by the visible appearance

A Plea for Infants.

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appearance or display of forky, pointed flames ; or, as it is render'd, *cloven tongues, as of fire, Acts ii. 3.*

BUT then, altho' our Lord did never himself initiate any into his kingdom by *Water-Baptism*, yet his disciples did, as appears from *John iv. 2.* before cited ;— *besides*, baptism with water was used to *Saul*, by *Ananias*— to the *Eunuch*, by *Philip*— to the Gentile converts, who had actually received the *Holy Spirit*, at the command of *Peter*— to the *Jayler* and his household, and to *Lydia* and her's. All which instances were after the descent of the Spirit. And this usage of water was understood as a rite by which men were initiated into the kingdom of Christ.—So that the famous *Apolo- logist* has greatly mistook in his reasoning, who thus argues, *viz.* ' That since Christ's baptism was not a baptism of water, but of the Spirit, therefore *baptism of water* was SUPERSEDED by the dispensation of Jesus.'^a

THE Messiah introduced his dispensation with the same doctrine which *John* taught, as requisite to his baptism, in all adult persons, *viz. repentance*, *Matth. iv. 17. Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ;* or is now ushering in upon you. *Mark i. 14, 15. Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye, and believe the Gospel.*— And *St. Peter*, after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord,

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says,

^a *Vid. Barclay's Apol. p. 422, 423.*

says, *Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*, Acts ii. 38.—Surely nothing can be more plain, than that *Water-Baptism* stands distinguished, in the *true christian divinity*, from the *baptism of the Spirit*, notwithstanding the *Apologist* above referred to, has denied it by his reasonings.—It stands join'd to repentance, as previously requisite to the remission of sins, and to the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

§ II. NOT that Water-Baptism had, even in the apostolick age, any *renovating, saving, efficacy*, tho' thus join'd with repentance, as will hereafter more fully appear—neither could from its own nature, become a *virtual* qualification for the extraordinary impartments;—but there were other reasons in the divine OEconomy that render'd it fit and proper. For we may, at first sight, in a great measure account for the wisdom and prudence of the institution, or shew how it appeared *fit*, inasmuch as the *miraculous gifts* were intended to *engage the attention* of men unto, as well *confirm* the doctrine of christianity; and therefore, it was highly expedient that those, who embraced the doctrine, should by some publick, solemn act, *declare* their belief of that doctrine; the miraculous attestations of which they had either received, or were going to receive. This was a confirmation to *all observers*, that these *charismata*

rismata were confined to the name and faith of Jesus.

§ III. I INTIMATED, that the *miraculous gifts* were conferred both *before* and *after* baptism: for, lest men should imagine that there was any *efficacy* in baptism, which could convey such extraordinary abilities, the revelation informs us of some having these gifts *before*, and others *after* Water-Baptism. So those that Philip baptized, *Acts* viii. 12. had not the Holy Spirit till after, see ver. 15, 17.— And, *on the other hand*, we are expressly told, that the *Holy Spirit* fell on all them which heard the word; even upon Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit, *Acts* x. 44, 45. upon which Peter says, *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, ver. 48. Here baptism was after they had received the Holy Spirit.—

§ IV. Farther, Baptism had a *moral sense* belonged to it, as it imported an open, voluntary devotedness and resignation to sufferings and death.— *Such as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death*, Rom. vi. 3.— *else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?* 1 Cor. xv. 29. The hazardous state into which the *first christians* were brought, by an open profession of christi-

christianity, with great propriety entitled their baptism, *a baptism of death*.

§ V. ANOTHER sense did belong to the baptism of the first christians, expressive of benefit and privilege, and that was, that mens being baptized *in the name of Christ*, manifestly shewed the *Mosaic Law* to be *dead*, not only to the *Gentile*, but to the *Jew* so baptized; Gal. iii. 27. *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; all become the children of God, by faith in Christ, *and all are one in him*, ver. 26, 28. Forasmuch as the promise to *Abraham*, was not to his seeds, as of many, *but as of one*; and to thy seed, *which is Christ*. So that the Gentiles, being baptized into Christ, could not possibly be under obligation to any *special*^b demand of the *Mosaic OEconomy*; and the Jew himself must be free, since the highest character which the law had sustain'd, was that of a *school-master* to lead to Christ, Rom. x. 4. Christ being the *end* of the law for righteousness, *i. e.* the *terminus, limit, bound, or grand effect* of the rectitude of the law, center'd in Christ. Nothing could have justified its ritual and ceremonial canons, had they not served to point out to them the excellency of that dispensation which Christ, their promised Messiah, should introduce. So that a Jew, being once baptized into Christ, could no longer need the tuition

^b By special, I mean, what belonged to the Jews as a separate people.

tion of the law ; but was manumitted from it, being dead to that wherein he was held, *Rom.* vii. 6. and *Col.* ii. 12. and 20 *ver.* compared.

§ VI. BUT the most universal sense of a moral nature, belonging to Water-Baptism, as a christian rite, is, *its being a symbol of that purity*, which the whole constitution of Jesus demands.

§ VII. PREVIOUS to the *defence* that may be made for the baptism of Infants, it will be proper to consider the arguments of some, against the usage of *any Water-Baptism at all*. And here I would principally remark on the argument used by that worthy confessor Mr. *Emlyn*^c. It appears to amount to this, *viz.* “ That as baptism may be supposed to come
“ in the place, or to succeed the Jewish cus-
“ tom or usage with regard to the *Profelytes*,
“ whom they baptized together with their chil-
“ dren. But having initiated them and theirs
“ by baptism, all the children of such Prose-
“ lytes, born after their Profelytism, were
“ looked upon as baptized children ; for the
“ baptism of their parents having made them
“ holy, they, their offspring, must be holy :
“ so that their needs no grafting in of the
“ *natural branches.*”

IN order to our discerning how far this will carry us, let it be granted, that none of the descen-

^c See his previous *Question*, in the first Volume of his *Tracts*.

descendants of *Profelytes*, born after Profelytism, were baptized ;— nevertheless, it will be proper to enquire whether they were looked upon as so holy, that they had no need of any *rite* to ascertain that their holiness? if this should not prove to be the case, with great submission, I am inclined to think, the argument will lose all its force.—

To see this, we must endeavour to form some clear idea of *Profelytism*, or the *manner* of their being treated in the Jewish polity. As to *Profelytes*, we are inform'd, that they were of *two* sorts, the Profelytes of the covenant, called by the *Rabbins*, the Profelytes of righteousness; and the Profelyte or Stranger of, or within the gate.

THE Profelyte of righteousness submitted to circumcision, and to the whole Mosaical pædogy. The Profelyte of the gate was suffered to dwell among them—was called an inhabitant, but was not circumcised, neither did he conform to the Mosaic rites and ordinances, only was tied to the obedience of those commandments, which the *Hebrew doctors* call, *The seven commandments of Noah*.

WE have no accounts from any writer, of their applying the initiating baptismal rite to the Profelyte of the gate, or to his children; and yet we have very particular descriptions of their manner of initiating a Profelyte of the covenant: “ for, according to the difference
“ of the *sex*, and the difference of *times*, the
“ rites of initiation varied. To the making
“ of

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“ of a *male Profelyte* at first; three things were
“ required ; as 1. circumcision ; 2. a kind of
“ purification by water ; 3. the blood of obla-
“ tion, which was commonly two turtles or
“ pigeons.— To the making a *woman Profelyte*,
“ were required *only* purification by water, and
“ oblation.—Now, because the Jews have nei-
“ ther altar nor sacrifice, they say, that for the
“ *males*, circumcision and purification by water
“ sufficeth; and for the *females*, only purifica-
“ tion by water ^d.”

ANOTHER writer observes, “ that there was
“ some distance of time between the male
“ Profelyte being *circumcised*, and *baptized* ;
“ the latter not being till the pain of circum-
“ cision was over, or the sore healed—and
“ that altho’ such as were of age, and baptized
“ by the Jews, were first instructed in the
“ principles of their religion, and in the im-
“ port of what they went about ; yet we are
“ not hence to conclude, that *children and in-*
“ *fants*, who were incapable of instruction,
“ were not admitted into the Church by bap-
“ tism. It is *most certain*, that they baptized
“ children, and generally with their parents :
“ and, if the parents were dead, the Consisto-
“ ry of *three* took care of their baptism. If
“ an Israelite, says *Maimonides*, takes up, or
“ finds an heathen infant, and baptize him for
“ a Profelyte, he becomes a member of the
“ Church ; but children, who were baptized

^d Godwin’s *Moses and Aaron*, p. 11, 12.

“ in their infancy, had the liberty to retract,
 “ which adult persons had not.”

THE same writer mentions a farther difference between the *Profelytes of the covenant*, and the *Profelytes of the gate*.—— “ The former were counted as real, tho’ adopted
 “ Jews, bound to the same observances with
 “ them, and conversed as freely with them,
 “ as if they had been so born; neither might
 “ they eat, drink, or deal with the Gentiles,
 “ more than the native Jews, lest they become
 “ unclean. They worshipped in the same
 “ court of the Temple with the Hebrews—
 “ and were partakers with them in all privileges both divine and human— whereas the
 “ *Profelytes of the gate* were such Gentiles, as
 “ were admitted to the worship of the God
 “ of *Israel*, and the hopes of a future life, but
 “ were not *circumcised*, nor yet conformed to
 “ the *Mosaical rites*.—— And tho’ admitted to
 “ worship in the Temple, yet, because they were
 “ uncircumcised, they were so far looked upon
 “ as Gentiles, as not to be received into the
 “ same court with the *Profelytes of the covenant*, but were esteemed *unclean*, and had
 “ their particular court assigned them in their
 “ worship of God, which was called *the Court*
 “ *of the Gentiles*, and *of the unclean*; nor were
 “ they permitted to dwell in the city of *Jerusalem*.”

• Lewis’s *Antiq. of Heb. Repub.* vol. ii. p. 460, 461.

† *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 33, 34.

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THIS account of the *two* sorts of Profelytes, will allow us a proper foundation for the following remarks.

1. IT is not at all strange, that we have no intimations of their ever baptizing the Profelytes of the gate, or their children; since they were looked upon as *unclean* by them, tho' they were admitted to worship at the same Temple; which they would not have been, had the Jews baptized them.—Moreover,

2. As they were *uncircumcised*, they, *i. e.* the males, had no right to such purification by water, for it was only made use of to such Profelytes who had submitted to circumcision, and to their children; or to such children whom they adopted as *Profelytes of the covenant*, being orphans.

3. THE infants of Profelytes of the covenant, tho' admitted along with their parents by circumcision, baptism, and oblation, the *males*; and by baptism and oblation, the *females*; yet they were in their generations subject to the whole Mosaic constitution; and therefore, tho' it was not requisite that their future offspring should be baptized, as the *immediate* offspring of *Gentilism* was required to be, yet they remained under the same obligations to circumcision and oblation, that the offspring of native Hebrews were under: so that the male descendants of these Profelytes were subject to circumcision, and the female descendants were to have the same *rites* perform'd for them, that

were perform'd for the female children of native Jews.

4. HENCE it will follow, that *christian baptism* cannot, with propriety, be looked upon as coming in the room and place of the baptism of Proselytes of the covenant—that is to say, it does not hence follow, that because baptism was not applied to the future male descendants of Proselytes, that therefore the future offspring of christian converts are not to be baptized: forasmuch as the descendants of the *Proselytes of the covenant* were, in after generations, subjected to the proper *initiating* rites of that constitution; so that altho' they were esteemed no longer *prophane*, as wanting the baptismal *rite*, and were esteemed *holy*, as the natural branches of an holy root, yet they needed this sort of grafting, *viz.* the initiating rites; and the initiating *rites* were applied to them in virtue of their being the branches of an *holy* root.

To ask here, the reason of the institution, and to object and say, what good could this do infants, who were perfectly incapable of receiving any moral benefit by it? would hardly be to treat an express command of God to *Abraham*, and to the *Jewish Lawgiver*, with becoming modesty.

ON the other hand, may we not with much more propriety conclude, that inasmuch as the infants of Jews and Proselytes had no *personal qualification* for the initiating *rite*, by which they were distinguished from the infants of
unbe-

unbelievers, and were thereupon own'd and admitted as parties in the *Abrahamic covenant*; it is but reasonable to suppose, that the infants of christians are as capable subjects of *baptism*, it being the *initiating rite* by which their parents were confess'd and own'd to be parties in the christian covenant.—It is plain, that the children of Jews, &c. were admitted in virtue of their parents belief, or in virtue of their professing their belief in the true God—and why may not ours?

WE are confessedly so fond of our infant-offspring, as to allow them capable of rights and privileges, which the *civil law* invests in them, by virtue of *intail*, or *other tenure* of possessions; and hereupon they are deemed legal claimants, or are esteemed lawful heirs of inheritances. — Notwithstanding which, as the children of Proselytes, baptized in their infancy, had a liberty to *retract*, when of mature age, and not abide by the engagement; so the lawful heirs of possessions, estates, or honours, may, by an act of treason or rebellion, forfeit those their *rights*, or become disabled from inheriting when, or even before they arrive at the age of full possession. And thus, the *infants of christians*, (as well as of Jewish Proselytes, or those of noble or high birth among men) tho' they are heirs of the spiritual inheritance, and as such have received the *rite of investiture*, yet they may reject the terms, and not comply with the conditions of possession; and so *finally* be disinherited.

WHAT

WHAT has been offered, might give us some light into that famous passage of St. Paul's, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* But, as there appears to be something very important in settling the sense of the apostle about the HOLINESS of a christian's child; I shall chuse to take some very particular notice of it.

AND by their being holy, I do not apprehend, he can possibly mean their being so in a *personal, moral sense*; but rather, he should intend the *privileges and advantages* to which a believer's child is manifestly born. In no other sense can I perceive, that the husband sanctifies the wife, or the wife the husband, but as the one or the other has the prospect of being better'd by such affinity. And thus the child may be looked upon as holy, its believing parent seeing himself obliged to dedicate it to God, and to educate and bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—Nor is the language harsh, or unnatural, by which the apostle has thus distinguished between the child of a christian parent, and the child of infidel-parents; since the one was likely to be educated in the fear and worship of the true God, and the other in the fear and worship of false Gods—the *one* was to be looked upon by its parent, as the offspring of the universal Father, who had given it birth and being; the *other*, as being obliged to *Diana* or
Proser-

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Proserpina for its birth, health and safety; she being the goddess to whom the Greeks paid their devotions, as the great protectress of their pregnant and teeming women:— the one to be devoted by pure water to the care and protection of heaven; the other to be carried round a fire made for that purpose, in the arms of the midwife, on the *fifth* day after its birth, as the means of its purification, which, we are told, was the custom of the *Greeks*.

THE imagination is wild, that *St. Paul* could intend by the expression, that one parent's being a christian, *would sanctify whoring, or make the offspring, begot out of wedlock, truly legitimate.* The christian doctrine is too chaste and pure, to admit of any such unchaste and impure inference.—

PERHAPS we may find out something to which the apostle might allude, or to which the expression stood *rather* opposed, as well among the *Greeks* as *Jews*. The constitution of the *Jews* made it a prophane, impure, or unholy offspring, if it had for *one* of its parents an infidel, see *Deut. xxiii. 2.* The law of *Moses* says, *A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation.* “ The word in the Hebrew is *Mamzer*, and is conceived not only to “ signify one begotten in simple fornication, out “ of the state of marriage, but a person, whether *male* or *female*, born of any woman “ whom the law prohibited them to have “ knowledge of, whether it was by violence “ or consent.— A person thus unlawfully begotten,

“ gotten, was not to marry with an Israelite,
 “ as all the *doctors*, none excepted, expound
 “ it, as Mr. *Selden* observes^s;” “ nor must
 “ a soldier marry the *fair captive*, unless she
 “ was baptized, and made a Profelyte of
 “ righteousness, as the Jewish doctors agree^h.”

HE might by this expression, *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*, have an eye to some *Grecian* laws and customs; as,
 “ They only shall be reckon’d citizens (by the
 “ civil law of *Athens*) whose parents are both
 “ so.—He was to be looked upon as a *bastard*, whose mother was not free—and
 “ none of spurious birth, whether *male* or *female*, were allowed to inherit either in sacred
 “ or civil things, from the time of *Euclides*
 “ being *Archon*ⁱ.—Tho’ in some places of
 “ *Greece*, whoever had a citizen for his father,
 “ tho’ his mother was a foreigner; in others,
 “ those also who were born of free women,
 “ when their fathers were foreigners, passed
 “ for *legitimate*, and inherited the freedom of
 “ the city they were born in, and all privileges
 “ consequent thereto^k.”

THUS may we see the great probability there is, that the apostle *Paul* might have his eye on the laws and customs of the *Greeks*, some of which, in that famous city of *Athens*, treated children as *bastards*, if born of parents, who were not both free; and such became disabled

^s Antiq. of Heb. Repub. Vol. iii. p. 265.

^h P. 261.

ⁱ Dr. Potter’s Archæol. Græca, Vol. i. p. 151.

^k Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 336.

abled to inherit either in sacred or civil things. With what beauty and elegance does he thus address to the converted *Corinthian Greek*, whether *male* or *female* parent; *q. d.* "I pray
 " you, have no uneasy thoughts about your
 " *unconverted partner*, or the *offspring* of such
 " *unbelieving wife* or *husband*; for to you all
 " the privileges of the christian covenant belong;
 " and by your means your *unconverted partner*
 " may be converted, and reap the unspeakable
 " benefit! and as to your offspring, it has an un-
 " doubted *right* to the benefits and privileges of
 " the christian constitution or kingdom, and you
 " may by baptism own it, look upon it as *holy*,
 " and treat it as an admitted, acknowledged
 " member of this kingdom. The laws of
 " Christ do not exclude it, as the laws of *Ju-*
 " *daism* would have done, or as the laws of
 " *Athens*, tho' one of you is yet an *alien* and
 " *foreigner*." —

Besides, the apostle has used the word *holy*, when speaking of subjects, as little capable of *sanctity*, as an infant. This every one must allow, who reads *1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5.* for there he has declared even of *meats*, the food and aliment of men, that it is capable of being *sanctified* by the word of God, and prayer.— May not then an infant be called holy, or be esteemed sanctified, on the faith and piety of its parent, or by an act of dedication of it to God, as well as a man's food be said to be sanctified, by a religious act of the *eater*? —

Objection I. It is objected, that to talk of the *Abrahamic* covenant, or to mention the circumcising of *Abraham's* male children, and the children of the *Proselytes* to Judaism, in all generations from *Abraham* to *Christ*, is nothing at all to the purpose; for it is not proved that *baptism* is in the place of *circumcision*.

IN defence of infants it is offered, that it is very pertinent to mention the *Abrahamic* covenant, and to take notice of infants having the sign or seal of it, from the time of *Abraham*, till the christian dispensation took place; forasmuch as the *Abrahamic* covenant is no other than the *christian* covenant, the very same in its nature and tendency. This is expressly asserted by *St. Paul*, in his epistle to the *Galatians*; more particularly see *ch. iii. 16, 17.* for the promise made to *Abraham* was this, viz. that in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; which seed was no other than *Christ*;— the which covenant with *Abraham* was confirmed before of *God* in *Christ*, four hundred and thirty years before the law.—It will then be incumbent on the *Objectors* to shew, why not only the natural male descendants of *Abraham* should all be oblig'd to receive the sign or seal of this covenant in their infancy; but also all the infants of the *Proselytes* of the covenant, of whatever nation; and yet, that when the rite of initiation is changed, and become

come capable of being applied to *both* sexes, that infants should not be allowed to partake of it.—There is nothing in the *nature* of the covenant to forbid this, because it is the *self-same* covenant, of which infants were initiated parties for *nineteen hundred* years, or thereabouts.—Surely, it will be necessary (in the eye of impartial judges) that they, who *oppose*, do more than say, that *infants are no where commanded to be baptized, under the full exhibition of the same gracious covenant.*—

If children were in all ages esteemed as parties or members of the true church, ever since God had a distinguish'd people in the world, we cannot give up the *infant-right* on account of a *mere* silence: but may with more reason conclude, that as the *painful rite* is abolished, and no rite of initiation in use among christians, but *baptism*, they must have an undoubted claim to that *rite*, unless there be something in the *rite* itself that is forbidding, or of which they are not equally capable with the former rite, which they underwent. *But*—there is no manner of difficulty lies in their way here, for the rite is in its own nature much more easy, and *more extensive*, as shall be consider'd hereafter. But perhaps there may be something in the *conditions* stipulated.

Obj. II. FOR it is objected, that infants are not capable subjects of baptism, since the *original commission* of our Lord's was, that his disciples should go teach all nations,

baptizing them ; and therefore *teaching* must precede baptism.

WE grant, who contend for the baptism of infants, that as it was under the Mosaic dispensation with regard to Proselytes, so it appears quite reasonable under the Christian, that when any nation or people are address'd to, that have not had the gospel, they should first be convinced of the truth of it, before we offer to baptize either them or their children ; for it would be monstrously absurd, to apply a *rite* that should distinguish them from infidels, or which asserts their childrens right to the privileges and benefits of the christian covenant, when they profess'd no belief in the christian doctrine, and most probably would continue in their Paganism, or Judaism, or Mahometanism, and educate their children in the same principles of infidelity. But then this we apprehend does no way invalidate or weaken the claim of christian infants, since they are as capable of receiving the sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, as *Abraham's* infants were ; and the faith of a christian parent, *nay*, his openly professing the christian religion, must give his *infant-offspring* a claim to the external, initiating rite of the covenant ;— by the rule of *analogy*, as well as that of all sober reasoning, we may fairly conclude, that the original commission was never intended to exclude infants. The *order of the words* will not make this a determined point, or bring the argument

gument to any issue; for if none must be baptized, but what are first taught, because teaching is put before baptizing, then forasmuch as children or infants are not capable of *believing*, therefore *all* of them, that die before they are believers, must be damned; for so says the *letter* of the text very expressly, *Mark* xvi. 16. *Nay*, it is the original commission *St. Mark* says our Lord gave his disciples, which they were to deliver in these words,—*He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*—But certainly infants were not intended to be excluded *salvation*, or *mercy*, or *life* here, on account of their being incapable of believing, any more than they were intended to be excluded the initiating, baptismal rite in the other place, on account of their incapacity of being discipled along with their parents. But this defence may appear more fully under our considering another sort of objection, *viz.*

Obj. III. THERE is express mention made in the New Testament of adult persons being baptized, but there is an *entire silence* with regard to the baptismation of infants; since therefore there is neither precept nor precedent in this case, it will follow, that to baptize infants, is to be wise above what is written, or it is to innovate upon the christian plan,

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LET it be considered, that this objection will absolutely lose its force in the mouth or from the pen of an *adult-baptizer*; inasmuch as the same high charge lies full against *adult-baptism*, as practised at this day among us: for I may with freedom assert, that there is neither *precept* nor *precedent*, in all the New Testament, for christians bringing up or educating their children till of mature age, before they baptize them. So that to do thus, is to be manifestly wise above what is written, and to innovate upon the christian plan.

Besides, there does not seem to be a defence capable of being made for such conduct. Are not such chargeable with *altering* and *changing* the nature and design of the rite? and instead of making it or using it in its original intention, *viz.* as *initiatory*, they use it as *confirmatory*, applying it only to such whom they apprehend to be fixed, resolved and determined christians;—whereas the *rite*, as used by the apostles, will warrant no such conduct: for as soon as men declared, that they believed the christian doctrine, they were immediately baptized. An open and voluntary profession entitled the man, who but a *few hours* before was an idolatrous pagan, or an infidel, obstinate Jew. Nay, nor was the baptism of an *Evangelist* ever deemed invalid, tho' applied to a *forcexer*, whose heart was not right with God, *Acts* viii, 13 and 21 *ver.* compared. It is indeed said, that *Simon himself also believed*; but what his faith was, may be learnt from the
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Spirit he afterwards express'd, who only wanted to make a penny of the miraculous impartments. And yet, tho' he had no better views, but was in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity, yet he is expressly said, by St. *Luke* the historian, to BELIEVE. And his baptism, as to the propriety or validity of it, is never once called in question, which, if it had been faulty in *Philip*, we might have expected, that *Peter* and *John* would have reprov'd him, and given him some cautionary rules to prevent his misapplying the christian rite for the future;—but there is nothing like it. So that we may fairly conclude, that by a bare profession of believing, men were entitled to baptism in the sense of the apostles.

We therefore humbly demand of *adult-baptizers*, that they will be pleased to give us some clear and determinate rule, by which we may judge when a child of common sense, or of an ordinary genius, becomes as capable of baptism as *Simon Magus*, and other such believers, who had base and low ends in professing to believe the christian doctrine. And after this, these Gentlemen should shew, that the conditions which they require, as pre-requisites to baptism, are not above the size of the apostolical standard.—Probably it may turn out, that the *adult-baptizers* act upon no other authority, than their own imagination; and that they have made moral temper and character requisite to qualify for baptism, when the Scriptures only authorize us to understand the commission for
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baptizing grown persons, to take place upon an *explicite declaration*, that they gave credit to the christian doctrine, whether in reality they did so, or not?—What else were the *carnal*, the *envious*, the *factionous Corinthians*, whom PAUL thanks God he had not baptized, only *Crispus* and *Gaius*, and the household of *Stephanas*; what were these? 1 Cor. iii. begin. will inform you. They were but *mere babes*, they had no true notion, at all, of the design of christianity; and therefore St. Paul could not speak to them, as unto *spiritual*, as to men of virtuous temper and character, but as unto *carnal*; at best, to such as knew no more of christianity, than a baptized infant;—and yet, these could boast of their *heads*, or those who baptized them, and imagin'd such to be their spiritual fathers!—

If then the New Testament authority is good with respect to the qualification for baptism, viz. that *no more* was requisite to found the claim upon, than a grown person's openly professing, that he believed that Jesus was the Messiah, tho' he was a vicious, wicked, immoral man; it follows, that to insist upon moral temper and virtuous behaviour, as the pre-requisite to baptism, is to go beyond, nay, to go without the *rule*, and to be wise above what is written. And if it should appear, that they, i. e. the *adult-baptizers*, have no settled measure, nor any exact standard, by which to judge of the *degree of qualification*, the charge in the objection, laid against infant-baptism, will

run high against *adult-baptizers* themselves. But there are *numbers* among the anti-pædo-baptists, who have long profess'd the christian religion, as well as *many* judicious, sober, hopeful Youth, who have long since exceeded the qualification requisite to baptism in the apostolick age, and yet are *unbaptized*.

By the way, I would remark, that the adult-baptizers are not the only sect of christians, that *innovate*, or act in this case, without any authority from Scripture ; for there are many among the other denominations of *Protestant-Dissenters*, who will not baptize the child of a professing christian, because, in their sense, he is not a *church-member* : nay, if I mistake not, some insist upon *both* parents being church-members, *i. e.* such as communicate with them at the *Lord's-supper*.—But, by what authority these congregations have settled and establish'd such pre-requisites to baptism, it behoves them to declare, that men may be able to judge, whether they are in these respects for *Bible-religion*, or for *Protestant Popery*.—

To go on ; *adult-baptizers* do appear to have neither *precept* nor *precedent* in Scripture to support their practice ; and instead of charging *infant-baptizers* with innovating, they ought first to clear their own character, or vindicate their own practice ; and to shew, that they do not *postpone* the application of the baptismal rite—that they do not pervert the design of it, by making it a *confirming*, rather than an *initiating* ordinance.

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Farther,

Farther, as to the other part of the objection; there does not seem to be such a *profound silence*, in the New Testament, about the baptism of infants, as is here supposed, or asserted; for there are no less than *three households* mention'd that were baptized, *viz.* that of *Stephanas*, of *Lydia*, and of the *Jayler*. And it is observable of *Lydia*, that she pleads thus with the apostle and his company; *if ye have judged me to be faithful, come into my house and abide*, Acts xvi. 15. She does not say, if ye have judged me and my house to have been faithful, or to be believers, come and abide with me.—She probably had children who were baptized, in virtue of her embracing the christian doctrine. Her *household*, of whatever it consisted, appears to have been baptized in virtue of her faith; and, for my part, I can see no reason why it should not have entitl'd her *children*, as well as her *household servants* or *vassals*, to baptism. It is certain there is no mention made of the *faith* of her household; but only of her *own* faith. And the probability seems *greater*, that they did not express any faith in the christian doctrine, than that there were no children in her household. It is particularly and expressly said of *Lydia* herself, *that her heart was opened*, and that *she attended to the things spoken of Paul*; but not one word of her household's *hearts being opened*, or of *their attending to the words of Paul*, or of *their being faithful*.—And is it not an odd sort of a declaration made to the *Jayler*, by *Paul* and *Silas*, *viz. that if he him-*
self

self believed, he should be saved and all his house, if his house was not entitled to baptism upon his embracing the christian doctrine? *Acts xvi. 31. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*—

IT is no objection, that in *ver. 34.* he is said to rejoice, *believing in God, with all his house* : forasmuch as it is no way improper to use this language concerning him and his house, tho' some of his house were young children—*moreover*, it will be an argument of great *credulity* in us, should we conclude from this account, that on the *Jayler's* and on *Lydia's* believing, all *theirs* was so influenced by their *faith*, as instantly to believe also!—*On the contrary*, these households appear to be consider'd and treated as entitled to baptism, merely from the *faith* of their heads.—And this seems to be the *Scripture Doctrine of Baptism*, viz. that the faith of a *parent* or *master* convert, entitled not only himself, but all that belonged to him, to baptism.—Hereupon, I would ask this fair question,—was there ever a greater *analogy* shewn to subsist between two things, than between the apostolick practice of admitting christian converts, with their households, into the christian covenant by baptism; and the manner of God's covenanting with *Abraham*, and ordering the rite of circumcision to be applied? both the household of *Abraham*, and those of the Profelytes of the covenant, were circumcised, and admitted upon the faith of their *parent, master, or head*; and so are the households

of christian converts.—Surely an unprejudiced mind will now own, that there is not an *entire silence* in the New Testament about infant-baptism.

HERE we find also the difficulty vanishing about the *right* of infants to baptism, *i. e.* of those infants, whose parents have embraced the christian doctrine ; since it is plain, that *Abraham's* faith entitled his children, nay his whole male household, to the *seal* of the covenant, the seal of the righteousness of his faith : correspondent to which, *Lydia* and the *Jayler* are declared to have their households entitled to baptism, upon their embracing the christian doctrine themselves : so that it follows, the *right* which infants have to baptism, is invested in the faith of their believing parent, according to that famous declaration of *St. Paul's* already taken notice of, *1 Cor. vii. 14. The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband : else were your children unclean ; or to be treated as the children of the Gentiles, whose laws determine them to be illegitimate, if both the parents were not citizens ; and so disabled from the privileges and benefits of their municipal laws and constitutions ;—but as the case stands, now they are holy, or may be treated, as entitled to the privileges and benefits of the christian constitution or kingdom.—Thus we see, that the silence is not so very profound with regard to infant-baptism ; but one may understand the*
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New Testament to be giving some very plain hints about it.

Obj. IV. BUT it is yet objected, that baptism is of very considerable importance in the affair of mens salvation, as it is recommended in the writings of the New Testament; *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark xvi. 16. And that expression of *Paul and Silas* to the *Jayler*, *Acts* xvi. 31. *Believe,—and thou shalt be saved, and thy house*; upon which he and his house were *baptized*. And the *Jews* were exhorted by *Peter* to repent, and be *baptized*, every one of them for the *remission of sins*, *Acts* ii. 38. And hence *baptism*, supposed of importance in the affair of a man's salvation, cannot be applied with any propriety to an infant, which is incapable of understanding any thing about it.

LET it be granted, that baptism is a standing *rite*, by which men and their offspring are initiated into the church of Christ; and that all men, who understand it in this light, are oblig'd to conform to it in this sense, as it is the subject of a *positive* command of Jesus. It does not hence follow, that it is the duty of others to submit to baptism, if upon an unprejudiced, honest examination and enquiry, they cannot discern, that the *rite* is yet in force. He must
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be a very *bigot*, who can lay such stress on any *positive rite*, as to imagine, that the neglect of it in those, who discern not its weight and moment, after a careful endeavour to know the mind of Jesus, will prejudice their final acceptance.—And happy is it for the *adult-baptizers*, that baptism is not essential to salvation; for were it so, what would become of numbers of their children whom they have educated, till they have arrived at a moral capacity and character, and yet have died unbaptized? It is worthy observation, that baptism is dropped, and not one word said about it, when *mens damnation* is mention'd. He that believes not, that is, who is not faithful and sincere, shall be damned.

THAT passage of our Lord's to *Nicodemus* may have something emphatical in it. *John* iii. 5. *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*—This, the cowardly *Nicodemus*, who was under the influence of a slavish fear of men, was to consider, as the *necessary qualification* for his being a real disciple and follower of Jesus; he could not be looked upon as a subject of his kingdom, whilst he was afraid of making an open profession of his faith in Jesus.—It is not, that there is any virtue in baptism to *save*, either infant or adult person; nor can it go farther in its *cleansing* power, than the taking away the filth of the flesh, *1 Pet.* iii. 21. But nevertheless it is a *rite*, an initiating rite, to the benefits and privileges of that covenant, which had
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the promises of eternal life. So men were baptized into the doctrine of remission, as they were thereby enter'd and own'd as parties in the christian covenant ; to whom the promises would belong, if they conform'd to the Spirit of it. But this will by no means prove, that all the *first converts*, who were admitted to baptism, were finally saved.—Professing the christian religion, and being baptized, were the qualifications for partaking of the light and aid of the Gospel, and of obtaining salvation by Jesus Christ, upon a proper use of such light and aid ; but neither baptism, nor a profession of the christian religion, ever did, or will, entitle any man to salvation, who attains not to the Temper and Spirit of the Gospel.

BUT if by those expressions, *If thou believest, and art baptized, thou shalt be saved, or, if thou believest, thou shalt be saved, with all thine house*, we must understand, that the gift of *eternal, happy life*, shall be thereby *secured* to a man, and to his house : this would suppose the doctrine of *imputed faith* to have a surprising operation !—But surely the apostles intended no more, when they spoke thus to the *Jayler*, and to *others*, than that they and theirs should have the *means* of eternal happiness put into their hands ; and they and theirs should be admitted and acknowledged by them, as members of Christ's church and kingdom.

THE settling of this point must have great weight in the doctrine of baptism. I would therefore, in order to shew, that by *he that believeth*,

believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he, and his household, can intend no more, than his having the great mean of mercy, the Gospel aid, that brings salvation, put into his hand, and into the hands of his; for his believing, and being baptized, was not sufficient to secure his own final acceptance.—Besides, Christ had himself many disciples, who apostatized, John vi. 66. And he declares, that in the day of retribution, in that day, Many will say to him, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils! and in thy name have done many wonderful works! To whom he will profess, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity, Matth. vii. 22, 23. So that many that have believed, i. e. profess'd to believe the christian doctrine; nay, I doubt not, many who have really assented to the truth of it, and have been baptized, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, when understood of the kingdom of glory. It therefore follows, as a clear case, that when the apostles thus express themselves, or our Lord thus expresses himself, that he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; or, if thou believest, thou shalt be saved, and thine house; must not be understood, that eternal life stood infallibly connected and secured by such faith and baptism; but only that salvation, i. e. the highest means of salvation, would be put into their hands. Hereupon we find the apostles so frequently describing sincere, constant and assiduous endeavour; great labour; patient continuance

ance in well-doing ; acts of self-denial and mortification ; and contempt of the world, as standing in connection with glory, honour, immortality, and with security of eternal life.——

OUR blessed Lord commands his disciples, such as believed on him, and were baptized, to *strive*, to strive with the greatest earnestness *to enter in at the strait gate ; for many will seek to enter in, i. e. by methods which do not imply due application, and a becoming earnestness, but shall not be able, Luke xiii. 24.——* So that men may believe the Gospel, and be baptized, and yet not be finally saved. They have indeed the most apt means of salvation, by embracing the Gospel, but that itself will not operate as a charm ; its being in the head, without duly affecting the heart, and influencing the life, will only leave the man eternally speechless, and without any plea in arrest of judgment, when the sentence comes forth, *Depart from me.——*

THUS it is evident, that baptism is of no farther importance in the affair of mens salvation, than as it is the external, initiatory rite, by which they are acknowledged as the subjects of Christ's visible kingdom, and entitled to the benefits of it ; and of this *rite*, so understood, infants of christians are capable, nay, they are the proper subjects of it.—

Farther, Infants, which are baptized by us, we own to be *incapable* of any thought or understanding about what is applied to them ; yet let none venture to *ridicule* the practice on

this account; for they will find that our Lord did himself use a *baptismal rite* to grown persons, and laid so much stress upon his doing it, that he told one of them, that unless he submitted to it, *he had no part in him*. And yet this very person, whom he was to so wash, or baptize, knew nothing, no more than an infant, of the *moral* intention or design of the baptism, see *John* xiii. 7, 8. Jesus says to Peter, *what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter*. Peter says, *thou shalt never wash my feet*. Jesus answered him, *if I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me*.—Let such, who throw contempt on the baptism of infants, because they are *not capable* of understanding the intention of it, beware, lest they do not, by such conduct, reflect on the *wisdom* of Jesus; who, in the instance just mention'd, has, as it were, rebuked such contempt, and stopped the mouth of the objector.

BUT perhaps infants may be better qualified for baptism, than the objection supposes; for the *Anti-pædobaptists* have sometimes put the baptism of our Lord, by *John* in *Jordan*, *Matth.* iii. 13.—as a *precedent* for adult-baptism. The contrary to which appears to me, to be the truth of the case; for tho' his being baptized of him *before* he enter'd upon his publick ministry, may intimate this as his pleasure, *viz.* that *baptism by water* should initiate *all* into his kingdom;—yet if the conditions of baptism contended for in *adult persons* be attended to, *viz.* *repentance towards God, and*
faith

faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; every one at first sight will perceive, that our Lord was capable of neither; he had no sin to repent of, and it is not to be said, with any propriety, that he could or should *believe* in himself, as the condition of his baptism. So that in these very material respects, if our Lord was a *precedent* for water-baptism, infants are only capable of resembling him herein; for they are innocent, and free from guilt or guile.—

Obj. V. LET it be objected, that if children are *pure, innocent and holy*, then they have no need of washing; and baptism must therefore be very impertinently applied to them.—

You see that here the precedent of our Lord's baptism flies in the face of such objection;—besides, there must be *something* taken for granted to rest the objection upon, or it will have no manner of foundation; and that *something*, I am of opinion, must be this, *viz.* that the *baptismal water* has, in a *moral* sense, a *cleansing* efficacy or virtue: or, that in the language of some, it can *renovate, regenerate, and change* the very nature of the subject. But this is denied, as it is impossible from the very nature of the thing; for how should that, which at most, when applied, can only wash away the filth of the flesh; how should this *cleanse, purge, or purify* the conscience? It cannot have this effect on grown persons,—which is confess'd by

the *practice* of *adult-baptizers*, which is professedly upon the principle of the subjects of baptism being *believers*, and such as are truly penitent and pious; and of consequence, they may be looked upon as *holy* or *sanctified*, before the application of water takes place. So that the same objection would lie against their *need* of washing, that lies against infants need of sprinkling; the *one* being actually purified and cleansed, the *other* truly harmless and innocent: and upon this principle, neither the one nor the other should be baptized;—it being quite superfluous to apply water to cleanse that which is already clean. And were it not so, water has no such deterfive quality, as would reach the inward pollution.—

Besides, it never was esteemed to have the place of an objection, *viz.* infants being the natural branches of an *holy root*. On the contrary, it was their being so, from *Abraham* down to Christ, that gave them the title to the sign or seal of the covenant;—and that made it proper to apply baptism to Proselytes and their offspring, as marks of their being distinguished from idolaters; in which impure state, they had been before Proselytism. And the rite being applied to the *infant-offspring* of christians, plainly asserts their being acknowledged holy, or as having a *right*, in virtue of the faith of their parents, to the privileges and benefits of the christian covenant.

Obj. VI.

Obj. VI. It is objected, from another party of christians, that to represent children as pure and innocent, is to falsify or deny *the truth*; for they are all born in *original sin*, and are all by nature children of wrath; and therefore *baptism* should be applied to them, as the *laver of regeneration*. That *baptism* hereupon must have a regenerating efficacy; the water being sanctified to the mystical washing away of sin, as well as its being a *rite*, by which the infant is incorporated into the body of Christ's church.

WHAT foundation there is for this hypothesis, I cannot see in the revelation. The doctrine of imputed *demerit* or *guilt*, appears to me to be contrary to all first principles of truth or equity. And the doctrine of what is called *original sin*, has been sufficiently exploded by many judicious writers; and of late, it has been treated with great judgment and ingenuity by the Reverend Mr. *John Taylor* of *Norwich*, in his *Scripture Doctrine* and *Appendix*. Which performances seem to have been as fatal to this enormous *Goliath*, as the stones from *David's* sling were to the *Philistine* giant.—To these writings I would humbly refer the objectors to the innocency of infants; and shall add, that no such gloomy, no such horrid idea should be indulged by a disciple of Jesus, as to imagine his offspring, his infant-offspring, the objects

jects of God's wrath, or chargeable with any guilt or demerit.—To talk of the *father's having eaten sowre grapes, and the childrens teeth being set on an edge*, is a proverb only to be expected from the mouth of a perverse, way-ward, provoking people, that dared to charge *God's ways with being unequal!*—And nothing less than an apprehension of having committed the most atrocious acts of villainy and wickedness, could have justified such an expression in the mouth of *David*, viz. *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me:—*for, let but *David* contemplate himself, at a time when he is not under the sense of such departures from God, and he will describe his formation in a much more just and becoming manner; even as the subject of his praise, and not of his self-abhorrence:—*I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well*, Pf. cxxxix. 14.

AND how does *Job* emphatically plead the divine regards and tenderneesses towards him, from his being God's workmanship? *ch. x. 3. Is it good to thee,—that thou shouldst despise the work or labour of thine hands?—*and ver. 8. *Thine hands have made me, took pains about me, accurately wrought me, discovered great skill in my formation;—thou hast fashioned me round about.* So exquisitely curious is the whole of my frame, that there is not a part but what is a real subject of wonder and amazement.—

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And wilt thou yet destroy me? Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me.—

THUS evident is it, that infants are so far from being the children of wrath, or the objects of God's displeasure, that they are his workmanship;—his, whose productions are always worthy of himself; his, whose *tender mercies* are over *all* his works.—They cannot by any means have offended him, for they have no power or capacity, no organ, no faculty, no appetite, but what he has placed in them; and they have not been able to express immoral or vicious temper and conduct.—*Moreover*, was it possible that God could look upon them as sinners, and as the subjects of his wrath, it must convey no very honourable idea of him, to suppose, that he should appoint an external rite, that, like an incantation or charm, should remove their obnoxiousness, and conciliate or appease his wrath towards them? This implies indeed an *imputation* of great virtue and efficacy to the water, and may do well enough as the antagonistical or repellent charm, to that of imputed sin;—for it cannot operate by any known law of reason or mechanism, in regenerating, or in renovating the nature of the infant's soul. So that unless the imputed *original sin* be something very superficial, the external application of water can never remove the turpitude.—

Obj. VII. BUT truly Mr. *Barclay* would take from us every Text that mentions Water-Baptism;

Baptism;—but how consistently with the *apostolical practice* already taken notice of, it behoves those to shew, who avow his principles. The *odd* manner in which he has explained away *Texts*, may be seen by any who consult his *Apology*. I shall, as a specimen, take notice of one, and that is, 1 *Pet.* iii. 21. *The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*—His comment is as follows:

“ So plain a definition of *baptism* is not in
 “ all the Bible; and therefore seeing it is
 “ so plain, it may well be preferred to
 “ all the coined definitions of the school-
 “ men. The apostle tells us, first *nega-*
 “ *tively*, what it is not, *viz. not a put-*
 “ *ting away the filth of the flesh*; then
 “ surely it is not a washing with water,
 “ since that is so. Secondly, he tells us
 “ *affirmatively*, what it is, *viz. the an-*
 “ *swer of a good conscience towards God,*
 “ *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*;
 “ where he affirmatively defines it to be
 “ *the answer* (or *confession*, as the *Syriack*
 “ version hath it) of a *good conscience*. Now
 “ this answer cannot be, but where the
 “ Spirit of God hath purified the soul,
 “ and the fire of his judgment hath burn-
 “ ed up the *unrighteous nature*.”—“ *More-*
 “ *over*, the apostle in this place does seem
 “ especially

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“ especially to guard against those, that
“ might esteem *Water-Baptism* the true
“ baptism of Christ,” (from the comparison introduced by him in the preceding verse;) “ to prevent such mistake, he
“ plainly affirms, that it is not that, but
“ another thing ;——*that it is not the putting away.*——Moreover, *Peter* calls
“ this here, which saves, the *ἀντίτυπον*, the
“ antitype, or the thing figured.”——
Apol. p. 419, 420.

THE stress of his argument lies in this, *viz.* that because baptism, the antitype, does not save by washing away the filth of the flesh, but baptism does save by the answer or confession of a good conscience towards God; therefore the apostle could not intend, but must exclude Water-Baptism.——This seems to be too sophistical; for the apostle *Paul* says, *that in Christ Jesus there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision*, Col. iii. 11. But will mens embracing the christian doctrine, some circumcised, and some uncircumcised, render them neither circumcised nor uncircumcised?—He asserts also, *that there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ*, Gal. iii. 28. But will this prove, that there remains no distinction of sex, when persons become christians?—Nay, he asserts likewise, *Gal. vi. 15. that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* But because neither the one, nor the other availeth,
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does it therefore follow, that a man's becoming a new creature, will leave him neither circumcised nor uncircumcised?—This would be esteemed a mere Jesuitical comment, and would want the *bocus pocus* of infallible authority to reconcile it to our *assent* or approbation.—And why should we give in to such a conclusion from the *apologist*?—The apostle had been mentioning *water, destructive water, from which, NOAH had been saved in the ark.* The *antitype* whereunto *baptism* does even now save us;—the *repercussion* or *reflection* that water now makes, has a *saving* aspect; and so is the proper *antitype* to water, when viewed in its destructive form. Nevertheless, it does not save us by the putting away of the filth of the flesh.—Nor do we contend for any moral virtue, or efficacy in the baptismal water: it is no where the doctrine of the New Testament.—But we agree with St. *Peter*, that baptism, the *antitype* to the destructive deluge, from¹ which *Noah* and his family were saved, can do no more than wash away the filth of the flesh: and that the answer of a good conscience will be requisite to our partaking of the benefits of Christ's resurrection and exaltation. But then this by no means proves, that *Water-Baptism* is here excluded; without water, you have nothing to stand as the *antitype* to the watry deluge. And it is not to be conceiv'd, that St. *Peter* should intend to exclude Water-Baptism, when

¹ So I imagine the particle *ὑπο* should be render'd, 1 Cor. iii. 15. saved, so as from fire.—

when he would not suffer men to go without it, who had already received the *Holy Spirit*, *Acts* x. 47, 48.—he commanded even them to be baptized.—

Besides, we have laid down this as a most general moral view of *Water-Baptism*, namely, that it should signify personal purity; and that this is the *demand* of the *rite* upon all such as would conform to the intention of it: just as circumcision, and the baptism of Profelytes had been, under former dispensations. So *St. Peter* uses a word, which signifies the DEMAND of the *christian rite*, viz. that men should be holy. And this is the proper sense of the word, *ἐπιπαρτημα*, render'd *the answer*. It is the very language of the *rite* to demand personal purity; which *baptized persons* must endeavour after according to their capacities, or the *rite* will signify nothing to them, or *something* worse than nothing.—

Obj. VIII. *St. Paul* has declared the impropriety of *Water-Baptism*, when he said, *I thank God, I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius*,—*I Cor.* i. 14. *And that Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*: for altho' *Water-Baptists* interpret *ver.* 17. as signifying, that *St. Paul* was not principally sent to baptize; yet this exposition, we are told, is to be rejected as spurious; for, *he was not sent to baptize*^m.

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^m See Barclay's *Apol.* p. 429. *Edit.* vi.

IT would be a sufficient refutation of Mr. *Barclay's* reasoning, should we only reply, that if St. *Paul* was not sent to baptize *at all*, he thus by *baptizing* acted beyond his commission; and should have made it the matter of his *humiliation* before God, and of his *penitency* before the *Corinthians*, *namely*, that he had knowingly and wilfully acted contrary to or perverted the design of his commission in *three* several instances among them.—And he might, no doubt, have had matter enough for *confession*, from what he had done elsewhere in his apostolic journeys.—But there is not any thing more evident, than the reason why *Paul* thanks God he had baptized so few among them, *namely*, his seeing that they made such a perverse use of their baptism (as has been before observ'd)—they made their *baptizers* their *spiritual fathers*, and set them up as the patrons of their faith! and hereby were splitting and rending the church into parties, and opposite, jarring sects and factions.—

IT is no manner of proof, that *Water-Baptism* don't belong to the appointments of Jesus, that *Paul* is thankful he had no party among the *Corinthians*, that could tumultuously cabal, and insult over others, on account of his having baptized them.—*Besides*, at the same time when it intimates to us, that preaching the Gospel was more properly the work of an apostle, it admits of baptizing to be very consistent with the apostolic character, since he owns, that he had baptized several persons among them.

THE spirituality of the christian dispensation does not, in the least, render baptism improper, since our Lord himself submitted to it. And the first christians, who had received the *impartments* of the Spirit in the highest or most extraordinary sense, were able to speak with tongues, and heard to magnify God, *Acts* x. 46. were upon this account looked upon as undeniably fit to receive Water-Baptism, *ver.* 47. So the reasoning of Mr. *Barclay* seems to have mistook the New Testament doctrine concerning Water-Baptism. Had he been present, with his own sentiments about him, he would not have said, *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we; or as St. Peter, have commanded them to be baptized;—*but he would have said, *these have already the baptism of the Spirit, the only baptism of Jesus; and they need no water, nor shall they have any.*—Thus opposite were the sentiments of St. Peter, and of this *Apologist*.

Obj. IX. BUT perhaps *Gal.* iii. 28. may be objected, *viz. that there is neither MALE nor FEMALE, but all are one in Christ Jesus;—*and more especially *Col.* iii. 11. *that there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision; and Rom.* ii. 28, 29. *for he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in*
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*the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God;—*which supposes, that the spirituality of the christian dispensation will admit of no positive, external rites.

I freely own, that the passage in *Galatians*, and that in the *Colossians*, do appear to belong to the christian, *baptismal rite*, *i. e.* that both passages appear to be of the same import, and to have a reference to the *rite* being applicable to *both sexes*; which had not been the case under the *Abrahamic* covenant and Jewish polity; for their *initiating rite* was applicable only to the males.

WHY I reckon that passage in the *Colossians* to be of the same import, is, that the apostle has the very same point in view in both places, *viz.* shewing the advantage of the christian institution, as prior to that of the Mosaic. *Besides*, he would be guilty of a *tautology*, should he be so understood, as to intend *Jew* and *Gentile*, by *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* here; for he had just used the terms, neither *Greek* nor *Jew*; and lest the word *Greek* should be understood as an appellative, only proper to the *Græcian* people, he subjoins *Barbarian*, *Scythian*, bond or free.

HIS declaring then, that *there is neither male nor female*, must refer to the distinction made among the Jews, by that initiating rite *circumcision*; and in any other sense I cannot find it intelligible. For,

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IN the ceremonial lustrations or purifications of infants, of both sexes, there was no difference under the law; the *females* being treated in the same manner as the *males* were treated, as to the burnt-offering, or the offering of atonement before the Lord, see *Lev. xii. 6, 7, 8.*—They were likewise esteemed *equally* holy with the males, as there was the same limitations prescrib'd to each in their laws about marriage, *Deut. vii. 3.*—*Thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.*—

AND there was the same law against the prostitution of a daughter, as there was against the prostitution of a son, to idolatry or incantations, *Deut. xviii. 10.*—*Nay, the very female slaves or vassals, might not be sold to a strange nation, tho' her master had dealt deceitfully with her, Exod. xxi. 7,—12.*

BESIDES, they did eat the passover, as well as the males, in every family; and altho' they were not equally enjoind to attend yearly the three great feasts at *Jerusalem*, with the males, (their various confinements, not always, or very seldom admitting of it) yet they did attend the feast of the passover at *Jerusalem*, as we find by *St. Luke's* account, *i. e.* when they had ability or opportunity, *Luke ii. 41, 42.*

MOREOVER, the Jewish females, both women and children, are *express parties* in the Jewish covenant, as may be proved from many places; among which consult, *Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12. Josh. viii. 35.*

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SINCE therefore we can find no other mark of distinction made between the males and females among the Jews, only that of the initiating rite of circumcision, we may fairly conclude, that the *removal of this distinction* is intended by the apostle, when he says, that in Christ Jesus, or under the christian dispensation, there is neither male nor female, circumcision nor uncircumcision; for in fact, unless we so apply it, it is false; forasmuch as, literally speaking, there must be both male and female, and there cannot but be either circumcision or uncircumcision.

“BUT the objection would suppose, that such is the spirituality of the christian dispensation, that no *rite* whatsoever is required; and that the apostle intended to intimate as much, in the above passages, cited in the objection.”——

BUT that could not be his meaning; since that *last* Text, in *Rom. ii.* says as strong things of the *Jewish rite*, it not determining him a *Jew*, or an *holy person* before God, or a *real* child of *Abraham*; but, he was to have the *circumcision of the heart*, to answer to the external circumcision, otherwise he would find it of *no avail* to him; or, in the language of *St. Peter*, he must have *the answer of a good conscience towards God*;—but then, it by no means determin’d it *unnecessary* for a Jew, consider’d as such, and whilst under that constitution, that he should be circumcised; for this was his indispensable duty, altho’ it was not sufficient to

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recommend him to God without a correspondency of moral, virtuous temper and conduct. And it is the same as to the *christian rite*; but then by *analogy* it does not follow, that because *baptismal water* can only wash away the filth of the flesh, and that the *saving* qualification, is the *answer* of a good conscience towards God, that therefore, we are not to be baptized;—for without *water*, a good conscience has no symbol of purity to which it answers. And consequently, in the language of *St. Peter*, *baptism* is not superseded by the spirituality of the christian dispensation.

WE might farther remark, that tho' the *moral temper* of the Jew was to answer the *outward rite* of circumcision, yet he had the *rite* applied in his infancy;—so that it stood as *far off* from the circumcision of the heart, in the Spirit, *with regard to time*, as the answer of a good conscience does from the application of baptismal water to an infant. So that baptism is fitly applied to an infant, notwithstanding the spirituality of the christian dispensation.

AND methinks there is something very natural in extending the application of baptism to its proper compass, *i. e.* so as to include infants, when we compare with this *one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all*, Eph. iv. 5, 6.—

Obj. X. It may be objected by men, who are for rejecting revelation, and being absolutely guided by the light of nature, that

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to talk of the use of the external rite of *baptism*, in a religious sense, is inconsistent with the pure documents of reason, or the light of nature.

It is confess'd, that this objection would have had some weight, if these *rites* had been represented as *in themselves* qualifying for the divine acceptance; but this is denied. Men may be baptized either in adult years, or in infancy, and in neither the one, or other age, receive any the least benefit from it, by neglecting to use aright and improve the benefits which it is the external sign or seal of their being initiated into;—so men may eat and drink in Christ's name, and in remembrance of his death, and yet become no way influenced by the *design* of it, which was to redeem men from all iniquity. But what of all this? it does not hence follow, that there is no aptitude in the one or in the other, to become the means of mens becoming more reasonable, or spiritual and holy.

NOR let an advocate for the religion of nature triumph here over revealed religion, the religion of Jesus; for, notwithstanding the light of nature carefully attended to, would not furnish a man with any one religious *rite* that is merely positive (this being absurd in its own nature; forasmuch as what arises from the light of nature, as the dictate of pure reason and fitness, must have something intrinsically moral in it,) yet men, under no other guidance than their own reasonings, and the conversation and
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reflections of those about them, I mean, men destitute of an exprefs revelation, have usually run, if not always, into *numberless* rites, and a *multiplicity* of idle and insignificant ceremonies.—Nor can any religion in the world boast of that simplicity which the christian can,—as any man must own, who forms his ideas of it from the New Testament, and from thence only.—Altho' there are some churches, which call themselves *christian*, that can vie with the most superstitious and idolatrous pagans, in superstition and idolatry.

Obj. XI. BUT it is again said, that tho' baptism might possibly become a *moral mean* to an adult person, yet we see not how it can affect an infant; for supposing it to die in infancy without baptism, it is a jest to imagine, that it will be worse treated by the universal Father, than if it had been baptized: for the omission of it was no matter of blame in the infant.

WE grant, that in the case of an infant dying unbaptized, there is neither *reason* nor *scripture* that will give us any foundation to suppose, that God will treat it the worse, for not having been baptized, since it was no way blameable for the omission. But it does not hence follow, that the parent of such infant would be blameless; for if he saw that God had ever demanded, that the infants of believers should have the same *rite* applied to them, that had been ap-

plied to their parents, and that the faith of the parent, or his professing the christian doctrine, entitled his infant-offspring to baptism, he would act an unchristian part, to refuse to have his child baptized.—

Again, It is not pretended, that baptism has any moral virtue or efficacy in it, but that it ascertains the right of the child or grown person to the PRIVILEGES of the christian covenant, *i. e.* consider'd as moral means ;—but it does not hence follow, that an infant would *fare the worse* in the hands of its Maker, for not having had this its *right* asserted, or sealed by baptism.—But the parent must be greatly guilty or criminal, if he saw, that it was the will of his Lord and Master, that infants should be thus acknowledged, as taken within the enclosures of infinite love and goodness, and yet neglected. The kingdom of God in Jesus, is certainly as condescending and compassionate, as the kingdom of God had ever been under *former* dispensations ; and this kingdom had always embraced infants, by the *very same rite* that their parents were admitted : and why should not we then conclude, that the infants of believing or professing christians must have a claim to the *initiating rite* of his kingdom ? But inasmuch as a *rite of initiation* has ever been thought proper to *distinguish* the people of God and their offspring, from idolaters and their offspring, *baptism* will be in force among christians while the world stands ; unless the whole habitable earth should become the kingdoms of the Lord
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and of his Christ, and there should be but *one* name, and *one* worship throughout the habitable world.

BUT it is time to consider some other ENCOURAGEMENTS, which christian parents have, thus to dedicate and devote their infant-offspring to God;—and,

I. THE kind expressions which the author of our religion shewed to infants, recommends the parental *Storge*ⁿ towards our offspring; and is a most engaging view of his government.—It should endear his name to all men, in that he is become not only our head and Lord, but he is also become the *Guardian* of our infants, and their lives and interests are under his care and notice. So that we may understand him as saying to a christian parent, when dying, *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve alive, and let thy widows trust in me.*—Besides,

OUR blessed Lord openly and affectionately declared of *infants*, that such was their simplicity and purity, that they were a standard of the qualification of grown persons entring and becoming the subjects of his kingdom. *Matth. xviii. 2, 3. And Jesus called a little child to him, and set him in the midst of them, i. e. of his disciples, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again, ch. xix. 13, 14. Suffer little children, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*

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ⁿ That instinct of nature, implanted in us for the preservation of our offspring.

THE admirers of Jesus, had many of them express'd a just and natural fondness for their children; and they (thinking Christ to be, what he really was, a prophet mighty in deed and word) *wanted his blessing on their infants.*—To this purpose they brought them to him, *that he might lay his hands upon them.* His disciples indeed rebuked them, weakly thinking, their infants *not capable subjects of Christ's blessing*;—but Jesus, so far from rebuking, encourages the temper of their parents, and complies with their request.—Mark tells us, *ch. x. 14, 16.* that he said, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God*;—and these young children, *he took up in his arms, he put his hands upon them, he blessed them.*—And Luke says, *ch. xviii. 15.* *that they brought unto him infants also*: or, as it may be render'd, *even infants*, (*καὶ τὰ βρέφη.*) So the copulative render'd *also* is used, *1 Cor. xv. 24. Rom. viii. 23. 2 Cor. i. 3. Jam. iii. 9.*—And even of infants, or concerning them, he gives this charge, *viz. that his disciples should suffer these LITTLE CHILDREN to come to him, and not forbid them*, see ver. 16. of that 18th of Luke.

WHAT can be more plain, than that the Jewish mothers were hereby encouraged to embrace the christian doctrine, even from the thought of having their infants under the care and compassionate concern of Jesus! For, if capable of being *blessed by him*, surely capable of that *rite* which initiated into his kingdom,—

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unless any could think so preposterously, as to imagine *infants* capable of being parties in the covenant, members of the body of Christ, acknowledged subjects of his kingdom, and yet not capable of the external *mark, token, sign, or symbol* of it.—

SURELY the disciples had some lessons to learn, from these instances, *viz.* how they should themselves behave towards *infants*; otherwise, it would have been sufficient to have had infants produced, as *samples* of humility and innocency, without our Lord's *blessing* them.— But the gratifying the desire of their parents, in so express a manner, must teach what regard and respect is warranted, by his *own example*, to the infants of believers; unless any will presume to say, that our Lord's blessing these infants, was only a piece of mere complaisance, and had no manner of reason or significancy in it.—Supposing that his blessing them, was only *praying* for them, if they were proper subjects of *prayer*, they must be proper subjects of baptism, because *prayer* is an express moral mean, and therefore superior to a *positive rite*.—

II. ANOTHER encouragement for christian parents to baptize their infant-offspring, is, that declaration of St. Peter's, when he address'd near 3000 converts in this manner,—*Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins;—for the promise is to you, and to your CHILDREN, and to them that are afar off,*—Acts ii. 39.—
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Would not any one of us, had we been part of St. *Peter's* audience, have understood him thus, "*Repent, ye that are capable of repenting, and be baptized every one of you; for the promise is not only to you, but to your children; therefore you need not confine the initiating rite to yourselves: for as it is the open and acknowledged claim that you yourselves have to the promise, baptism must be applicable to your children also, as the promise is to them as well as to you?*"—The baptism of the Jewish converts, was a sort of cancelling the *seal* of circumcision, and why should they leave the same seal uncancell'd in their children?—It is therefore plain, that,

HE must intend to intimate to them, their childrens right to baptism along with themselves, and they must understand him so; for at the same time, and in the same breath, that he bids them *repent, and be baptized*, he tells them of *the promise being made to them, and to their children*. Had he had any *excluding* reserve in his own mind, it would have been unjustifiably wrong; for he ought to have explained himself, and not have talked of a *promise* belonging to their infant-children, whom he knew wanted no repentance, and could not believe: but *on the contrary*, he intimates, in the plainest manner, some sort of interest that their children had in the promise; and therefore, they must naturally think of applying the *rite* or *seal* to them also.—To have forbid it, would have been enough to have raised a jealousy,

jealousy, and occasion'd great and warm debates among them.—They knew that their children had partook of the initiating rite of the Mosaic covenant along with them, *i. e.* in their infancy ; and if they themselves were to be initiated into the christian covenant by baptism, they would have looked upon their children, as *not enter'd* without it ;—which *great difference* in the treatment of their children, could never have been pass'd over without the greatest objection and clamour. So that the supposed absolute *silence* about it, is a *violent presumption* in favour of their infants being admitted along with them to the same rite of initiation. And *moreover*, when we call to mind the *manner* in which these very people received, into their constitution, the Proselytes of the covenant ; nothing but the prevalence of the most inveterate prejudice can lead us to suppose their infants were denied baptism.

Obj. XII. To this it is objected, that the christian doctrine was not calculated to *indulge* mens prejudices, but to *combat* them ; as appears by many instances in the New Testament writings : and that therefore, we are not to suppose that the Jewish children were admitted to baptism. More especially, as there is no one *express* mention made of an infant's being baptized. *Nay*, that *John the Baptist* has actually combated this prejudice, by his telling the people, *Matth. iii. 9. that God*
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was able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.—

IN answer to which it may be said, that this objection has not any force; for tho' there is no express mention made of the baptizing of *one* infant, yet, from what has been offer'd, the probability lies greatly on the side of *infant-baptism*, from an impartial view of the Revelation.—

Besides, this cannot be understood, as *combating* the Jewish prejudices about infant-baptism; for it lies thus, the *harbinger* had taught the converts which he made, that the kingdom of the *Messiah*, was to be a noble, exalted kingdom, a *kingdom of heaven!* a kingdom of very enlarged privileges to what they as Jews enjoyed; and that it was a matter of vain boasting in them, to say within themselves, *we have Abraham for our father.* The very inanimate stones in the desert could have as good a *claim* to their being the children of *Abraham*, as they had, who wanted every moral disposition, who *rested* in their natural descent, and imagin'd, that because of this, they were the subjects of divine favour. No, says *John*, let me tell you, you are so wretchedly mistaken, that God is able to raise up of these stones, continuing such, as proper children of *Abraham*, as you are. You are only his children as born of the flesh, not in the temper and complexion of your Spirits; and as all *matter* is essentially the same, only differently modified in its parts, these

these very stones would be capable of claiming as near a relation to *Abraham*, in a proper sense, as you. Let it be observed, that this could have no manner of reference to their infants; they are not at all concern'd in the declaration; for they were not capable of *thinking in their souls, or in themselves*, about their being descendants of *Abraham*; nor were they capable of bringing forth fruits *meet for repentance*. So that this will not stand as an instance, in which the Jews had their prejudices *combated* about their childrens right to the initiating sign of the covenant.

III. *Parents*, who profess the christian religion, may be encouraged to dedicate and devote their infant-offspring to God, by baptism, since they are by express command to bring them up and educate them *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. vi. 4. *i. e.* they are commanded to bring them up, nourish, and feed them, with that healthy, pure, and proper instruction, that is the nurture and food of christian-children;—and *in the admonition of the Lord, i. e.* as the subjects of his laws. The *admonition* is to have the force of a law; (*νομοθεσια* °) the word render'd *admonition*, in its true acceptance, implies authority; especially when thus used, *the admonition of the Lord*, it signifies to put them under the mind or law of Christ.—This consideration should encourage a *parent* to apply the *rite* to his child, as it is

° Compounded of *νο* and *θεσια*.

an acknowledgment of its being thus put by him, under the care and dominion of Jesus. The authority of Jesus over it, must be asserted in its nurture and education, as well as his tender concern for it.—

AND he may reasonably do so, because, if the baptism of his child was to be *defer'd* by him, *till after* he had thus educated and brought it up, he would either have had it mention'd, as a motive that he might use with the child, to encourage its attention, *viz.* that it should hereafter have the initiating rite—or, at least, the *standard* of the child's meetness, either from age or experience, would have been expressly ascertained:—but the *absolute silence* that there is about christian parents *deferring* the baptism of their children, till of mature or adult age, is a strong presumption, that the *time of initiating them* could not be mistaken; but was obvious from the custom of the true church for nineteen hundred years. The laws and customs of which church had always allowed of their being initiated in *infancy*; and that the condition or qualification was, the *faith of their parents*, or their *profession of the true religion*.

IV. CHRISTIAN parents may be encouraged to dedicate their infant-children to God by baptism, since those their children are actually concerned in the *doctrine of remission*, or in the *efficacy* of Christ's death. But *baptism for the remission of sins* may be properly applied to infants,

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fants, tho' innocent, and under no charge of blame ; since a *deliverance from death* is, in the language of Scripture, at least a part of the doctrine or benefit of remission. Any one will own this, who reads over *Rom. v.* and *1 Cor. xv.*—in which last argument of *St. Paul's* he says expressly, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*, ver. 22.—Now, either infants do not become mortal through the one offence of *Adam*, and so have no concern in the death of Christ, *i. e.* in the restoring influences of it ; or, if they are render'd obnoxious to death by the sin of *Adam*, and so may be said to die in him, then, as certainly as they do so, they shall be made alive in Christ, *i. e.* if all that die in *Adam*, shall be made alive in Christ, and if children die in *Adam*.—But the death of infants thus consider'd, renders them actually concerned in the death of Christ, and it must then follow, that they have a right to baptism, as the sign or seal of the doctrine of remission ; unless any will say, that they are capable subjects of the benefits, but not of the external sign of those benefits.—But, forasmuch as infants were undoubtedly capable subjects of Christ's blessing, as they were actually blessed by him, so they must be capable subjects of his care and notice, as they are creatures subject to die in infancy, and will become a part of the ALL, that shall be made alive by him.

If it should be thought presuming in any, to oppose the most current opinion of *fathers* and of *synods*, even as high as that famous
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African one of 254, wherein *infants* are supposed to be baptized for *the remission of sins*. I might refer any common reader to that very decree translated into *English*, by the *Author of the Enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the primitive Church*^p; for that same decree determines the fitness of applying baptism to infants, *as they are the workmanship of God, and have no sin that is their own*.—And altho' we deny that infants can have any other folks sins imputed to them, either that of their fathers or grandfathers; or can be chargeable with any crime whatsoever, the consent of their will being essential to guilt or demerit; yet, we are willing to own, that there is a *purging* or *cleansing*^q, that may be figured by their baptism, and that is, from death or mortality. For Christ has thus purged or cleansed the consciences of adult persons from dead works, that they may live to God, *Heb. ix. 14*.

V. CHRISTIAN parents are encouraged to dedicate their children to God by baptism, forasmuch as the conduct is highly fit and reasonable; for, the church of Christ would not be *visible*,

^p Part ii. p. 46.

^q Nor is this any unscriptural sense of the word *cleanse*; for *καθαίρειν* properly signifies subversion, destruction, or demolition, and is so used by St. Paul, 2 Cor. x. 4.—for the pulling down of strong holds—and ver. 8.—for your destruction.—Thus the blood of Jesus may cleanse from sin, by demolishing or making void the dominion of death. And the word *καθαίρειν*, so understood, may possibly refer to the *cleansing*, i. e. the pulling down or demolishing the infected houses of the lepers, see Lev. xiv. 45.—

visible, if there were no external *rites* or *services*, by which its members might be distinguished. But all societies among men, that have privileges and benefits belonging to them, have some *criteria*, or *marks*, by which they acknowledge their members, and have some disqualifying laws. These have had such regard to the infant-offspring of their members, as to make laws concerning their right by *patrimony*, or how qualified or disqualified by birth;—and the *church of God* has ever admitted the infants of its subjects to be enter'd and acknowledg'd, as enfranchis'd in its *rights* and *privileges*. So that as in conformity to all *order*, divine and human, the christian church has included the infants of its members, as entitled to the *rite* of initiation: Hence the christian parent, by thus *dedicating* his offspring, behaves worthy the character of a reasonable being, that discerns the christian constitution to have *advantages* attending it, every way worthy, not only his own concern, but the *interests* of his offspring. And by applying the *rite*, he openly asserts the proper extent of the kingdom of Jesus:—whereas, withholding the *rite* from infants, supposes them as not entitled to its privileges, or not as members of Christ's *visible church*. For if baptism be the *rite* by which men are enter'd as the allowed, acknowledged members, or subjects of Christ's kingdom, it follows, that till the *rite* be applied, even men that believe the Gospel, as well as infants, for want of baptism, are not the

the *allowed, acknowledged* members of Christ's church.—But the professing christian, that sees his infant entitled, by virtue of his own profession, to baptism, will with pleasure thus dedicate it, as it is hereby admitted and owned to be entitled to the benefits of the constitution.—He will not, by denying it the *initiating rite*, express any *indifference* he has about the privileges and honours of the christian covenant;—but, *on the contrary*, express his high sense of the *great honour* conferr'd on his infant-offspring, that they are thus admitted and enrolled, as *heirs* of the everlasting inheritance!—

CAN it delight the heart of a parent, to think his child is born an heir to a great estate? or that he has a son born, that shall inherit his titles?—or that shall succeed him in honourable employments?—what are all these foundations of joy, to that of a christian, that can look upon his infant-offspring, whether *male* or *female*, as equally entitled to the *honours*, the *riches*, the *pleasures* of the kingdom of Jesus?—

THIS view of baptism, if allowed to be just, will suggest to us the following things.

I. FROM what has been offered, it does plainly appear, that there was no manner of occasion for giving any *express law* to the Jews, about the *initiation* of their infant-offspring, into the christian covenant: since by *Water-Baptism* they had ever been used to initiate the children

children of converts to Judaism; and in consequence of which, *John* the harbinger came initiating them and theirs into a *new* dispensation by water, *Matth. iii. 5.*—and the *Messiah* himself was initiated into his publick ministry by water, even *before he began to combat temptation.*—All of which circumstances taken together, give us a most convincing view of the clearness of the doctrine of *infant-baptism*:—for as Christ was not tempted till after his baptism, so infants are like him baptized, before they enter upon the conflict.—And as to the *Gentiles*, the apostles being Jews, had as plain a direction about the initiation of them and theirs, as could possibly be imagin'd.—So that the giving of an *express precept* about infants initiation, was quite needless.

II. THAT *Water-Baptism* is a rite, which undoubtedly belongs to the christian institution. For the *dispensation of the Spirit*, or the baptism of the Spirit in the *apostolic age*, was attended with Water-Baptism, and did not at all supersede it.—

III. THAT *Water-Baptism*, as a *christian rite*, conveys not any *moral* influence; it cannot regenerate, change, or renovate the Spirit of a man; or alter his moral character towards God, *i. e.* make him qualified for happiness, who, in his own habitual frame and disposition, is impure, or unholy: for *it only can remove the filth of the flesh.*

IV. THE *qualification* for infants being baptized, or the *households* of any one, converted

from infidelity or idolatry to the christian faith, was, in the apostolic age, the FAITH of a *parent, master or head.*

V. IT therefore may be looked upon, to be no other than an *initiating rite*; and the *intention* of it will be perverted, when it is used as a *confirming rite.*

VI. THEY must mistake the true nature of *christian baptism*, who teach, *that it secures the final salvation of men*; forasmuch as it has no moral efficacy, and rises no higher in the *qualifications* for it, even in grown persons, than their professing the christian religion, whether sincerely or not.—Every unprejudiced mind must allow, that the Gospel itself, is a *much more important mean* of mens salvation, than *baptism* can be; and yet, many will finally perish, who have been favoured with the *New Testament* in their own language, and who might have found eternal life in it.

VII. THOSE churches, who require a *moral qualification*, as a necessary pre-requisite to baptism, seem to have no authority from Scripture for their demand, and are wise above what is written. For all, who profess'd the christian religion, or to believe in Jesus, whether they did so, or not, in reality, were entitled to baptism, both they and their households.—They therefore act a presumptuous part, who refuse to baptize any, whose parents, masters, or head, do openly profess the christian religion.—Such should not baptize at all; for if SINCERITY be made by them a necessary pre-requisite to baptism,

baptism, it is impossible any one of them can, with certain propriety, baptize the infant of any parent; he cannot, unless he has an *infal- libly clear discernment* of his Spirit.—Nor can any, upon this principle, be able to judge of the fitness of any *adult* person for baptism.

VIII. THEY mistake, who imagine, that baptism is *improper* and *unfit* for the offspring of christian parents, because of their *being the branches of an holy root*;—for it is this holiness, that, in the language of the Revelation, qual- ifies their offspring for baptism: or, *Water- Baptism*, when applied to an infant of christian parents, does, in its own nature, declare, that its parent, or parents, is, or are christians.—

IX. THE infant of a christian parent, has not so properly its privileges *enlarged* by bap- tism, as *asserted*; for baptism only asserts its right to the blessings of the christian covenant, which it may either *use well* or *abuse*, when it becomes a moral agent;—unless

X. WE suppose, that the parent of such child is influenc'd, by such act of dedication, to *greater circumspection* and *care* in its nurture and education; if so, then baptism will appear to have *increased* the advantages of the infant.

XI. THERE is an apparent *decency* and *fit- ness* in having an initiating rite applied to the infants of christians; since no good constitu- tion of *human* government, and none of the *divine*, (since he has had a seperate, distinguished people in the world) have ever neglected ap- pointing *measures of qualification*, for their as-

certaining the *right of infants* to the benefits of their communities.—

XII. THE imputation of *original sin* to children, and the asserting that they are, by nature, and as born into the world, the deserved objects of *God's wrath and damnation*, has been the *fatal, delusive source* of those ridiculous doctrines of *Water-Baptism*, which teach, that it can do *inconceivably more* than *put away the filth of the flesh*;—that it can change the *very nature* of the subject, and so alter its *state* towards God, as that, of a child of *wrath and damnation*, baptism makes it a child of *favour and salvation*.—

For instance, the PAPISTS are so fond of displaying their *spiritual sorcery and incantation*, that they have made the Sacraments to give *grace*, in their language, *ex opere operato*; that is to say, they give grace by the efficacious virtue of the actions performed, or words spoken in the administration of the *rite*.

AND what they intend by giving grace, *ex opere operato*, may be learnt from an express decree of their *Trent Council*, which is, “ that
“ not only all sin is so taken away by baptism,
“ as not to be imputed, but it leaves no sin
“ inherent, nothing that can be imputed as a
“ sin to those who are baptized *.”

No wonder men have been, and are so extravagantly fond of themselves, on account of their baptism,—even so as to rely upon it for their *security* or claim of eternal salvation! and
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* Counc. Trid. Sess. 5. decret. 5.

all this, without concerning themselves in the *moral claim* of this positive rite, *viz. the answer of a good conscience towards God!*—

NOR need it become matter of surprize, that, when the *priests* had thus imposed on the weakness of their *charge*, by implanting and rooting in them this leading principle of superstition, they should *add* some actions of their own, with *SPECIAL signification*; as that of *exsufflation*, or breathing hard upon the party, to exorcise and conjure the devil out of him,—putting salt into his mouth, and anointing him upon the crown of his head with holy *chrism*, &c. all to express the *great feats* that were done for the infant.—And that the whole virtue may not be supposed to be only in removing his guilt, and driving the devil out of him; they have actions expressive of strong resolutions that they implant in him, by signing him with the *sign of a crucifix*.—By all which, these great dealers in magic, render themselves of unspeakable importance.

THE whole of this vile superstructure is founded on a most enormous and corrupt foundation,—*viz.* that impious doctrine of God's workmanship, being by nature, and as it comes out of his hands, *perverse, degenerate, and diabolical!* just as if the *all-holy, righteous, and good creator*, should make beings of a nature opposite to those constitutions of things, under which he designed to place them! or, as if he did not make the human offspring for himself, but for the *devil*? Nay, one would be inclined

inclined to believe from the *doctrine*, that if it is true, we are properly the workmanship of the *devil*, and not of God;—and if so, those *spiritual exorcists* above-mention'd, are guilty of violating the *laws of right*, in dispossessing the devil out of his own property; or in taking from him what, by nature, is truly his own. But,

XIII. If the *inventions* of men, or *conjurations* of priests, who want to have possession of the *souls* of men, in order the more effectually to have the command of their passions and purges, take place, we may expect to hear of their *sacred* and *consecrated hands* giving virtue to the water, and making it *much more* efficacious, than from the hands of the apostles, who could not make it reach farther, than *the putting away the filth of the flesh*.—For, notwithstanding the *apostles* could make *no more* of baptism, than an *initiating rite* to a grown person, and to his offspring or household; yet, these *Gentlemen* pretend to a *much greater* efficacy in their administrations: for the very reason, that they had their *ordination* from the hands of such, who, in an *undoubtedly lineal succession*, derived their powers from such, who derived their powers from the apostles;—and therefore, since a *snow-ball* greatly enlarges by long rolling in the snow, it follows, that the apostolical powers have greatly swell'd by tradition.—Upon such sort of *pinnacle* principles, you may now and then expect to hear of grown persons being REBAPTIZED.

Their

A Plea for Infants.

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Their *first baptism* has not had water enough, or has been only the *baptism of water*,—and performed by the hands of persons, who did indeed believe the doctrine of Jesus, but were not believers in *their sense*; and therefore, had not proper authority; never had *apostolical ordination*, *i. e.* never received the gifts of the *Holy Ghost* from episcopal, or truly authorized hands.—Nay, what is yet much more marvellous, in some countries may be found, men claiming these apostolical conveyances, who are such *perfect adepts*, in the art of applying water with a *regenerating efficacy*, that they can *half baptize*, *i. e.* they can, they say, apply water just *so far*, as will secure the *happy state* of an infant, should it die with that baptism; and yet, if it should live, it requires to have another *half* added, *i. e.* it must be *better done*, else the *first saving baptism* will not be sufficient for the purposes of holy living among men!—And we may be assured, that no man is *sufficient*, or can be *sufficient for these things*, unless he has actually had conveyed to him some very *extraordinary* impartments.—But to give every man his due, it is incumbent on me to take notice of the conspicuous virtues of these *wonderful* apostolical men; and therefore I would remark on the uncommon modesty of some of these uncommon men, who glory in their BEING CALLED OF GOD, AS WAS AARON; and are so humble, as to lay the foundation of their claims upon the *Levitical Priesthood*,—which must be expressive of their great humility; since

since we are assured, *that there was NO MANNER OF PERFECTION belonging to that order!* see and compare *Heb. v. 4.* with *cb. vii. 11, 19.*—

BUT, to add no more,

XIV. WOULD men, who call themselves *christians*, form their notions of *Water-Baptism* from the plain doctrine of it, as it lies in the Revelation; no objection, no contempt, no ridicule, would be able to fasten upon it: but it must appear worthy of that rational, pure, benevolent scheme of truth, which the *Son of God* has exhibited to men.——

P. S. IT might have been expected, that I should have took some notice of the *MODE of baptism*; but a small *pamphlet* lately published, entitled, *Plunging a Subject of Bigotry, when made essential to Baptism*, has made that an unnecessary task.——

F I N I S.



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APPENDIX

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TO THE

PLEA for INFANTS.

In which their

RIGHT to BAPTISM

Is farther vindicated,

AGAINST

The Rev^d. Mr. JOSEPH BURROUGHS's
Attempt to exclude them,

IN HIS

TWO DISCOURSES

Relating to

POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS.

*Suffer little children to come * unto me, and forbid them not—*
JESUS. Luke xviii. 16.

* i. e. be brought, see v. 15.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. BRACKSTONE, at the Globe in Cornhill. Price 6d.

Where may be had, *The Plea for Infants.* Price 1s.

APPENDIX

TO THE

LIBRARY OF THE

AMERICAN

LIBRARY

OF THE

The Rev. Mr. John Burroughs
Attempts to exclude them

IN HIS

TWO DISCOURSES

POSITIVE MATTER

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APPENDIX
TO THE
PLEA for *INFANTS*.

THERE is to be found among us, a *Sect* or *Party* of Christians, who are very apt to express Astonishment, because all who call themselves Christians, are not of their Mind in that very *peculiar* thing in which they differ, or by which they are distinguished. This, every one may easily come to the Knowledge of, who for any time is in free Conversation with an *Antipædobaptist*; for let him be the best natur'd Man, or of the most generous Principles, in all other Regards, he can hardly ever forbear expressing some unseemly degree of Warmth, if his particular Opinion is debated. Nor can he publickly defend his *Peculiarity*, without being in great danger of losing his Temper, and calling in question either the *Capacity*, or *Integrity* of all his dissenting Brethren.

Adult Baptism is so clear a Point, and *Infant Baptism* so dark and ridiculous a one, that he presently is convuls'd with Indignation, and declaims with more than Apostolical Authority.

Now altho it must be own'd that *Truth* does not always side with Numbers, or take up her dwelling with the Majority, yet it seems somewhat wonderful, that she should only have so *small an handful* of Advocates, among the many Parties and Sects that make up the Christian World. Nor only so, but it is amazing that this particular *Feature* of hers, should differ so widely in its Effects upon its *Admirers*, even as to produce an unhallowed, an uncharitable Zeal in every *individual*, in proportion to the Attachment he has for it! For scarce any exception will lie against this Observation.

Hence, One would be tempted to conclude, either that *high Calvinism* was a Truth, and that truly none but a *very small few* of the human Race were elected or chosen of God; and that accordingly the Bulk of Mankind are judicially blinded, and so rendred unable to discern the plainest and most important Truths; viz. that of *Adult Baptism*, together with the Plunging, i. e. saving Application of Water. Or, that if this be not the Case, that *Immersion* has some Physical Influence on the *Blood* or *Spirits*. For why so feverish a Flow, whenever this view of the *Rite* is call'd in question? Or, whenever a Defence is attempted? What else can we conclude, when we hear Men so angry

with Arguments drawn from the *Abrahamic Covenant*, in vindication of *Infant Baptism*, as to deny *that there ever was any such Covenant made with Abraham!* and that *Plunging* is so far from being a *mere Mode*, that it is of the *Nature and Essence* of Baptism.

I am aware some will be ready to say, that two Discourses lately published, on the Subject of *Positive Institutions* is an Exception, nor would I be guilty of detracting from the Character, and Merit of the worthy Author. Nevertheless, I must take the Liberty to make some Remarks, as an Appendix to the *Plea for Infants*.

And I shall begin with *Positive Institutions*, concerning which, I find, that in Order to deter and dissuade from a Neglect and Contempt of *Positive Commands* from plausible Arguments, this is given as an Example, *viz.* " *That the absolute Necessity of the one, and the manifest Inferiority and Subserviency of the other, is manifest Unrighteousness and Injustice towards God *.*" Which Example, can only be defended, from Men's making this a Reason of their wilful Neglect of the Positive Institution; for if it should be understood, as expressing false Ideas of the Distinction between *Positive Commands*, and *Moral Righteousness*, the Example is then itself a false Example, and delusive; for herein is the true distinction between *Positive Commands*, and *Moral Righteousness*;

* Mr. Joseph Burrough's two Disc. Page 7.

the latter being of absolute necessity, and the former manifestly inferior, and subservient to the latter. If therefore such an Example should be intended to express a false way of Reasoning, or a wrong method of forming our Sentiments, concerning the difference between *Positive Commands*, and *Moral Righteousness*, it must be calculated to mislead, not to inform the Mind. It must, forasmuch as this is the plain and manifest Doctrine of all Revelation, viz. *That God will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*. Even under the *Mosaic Constitution*, so great was the difference between *Moral Temper*, and *Positive Rites*, or *Commandments*, that *David* tells God, *Thou desirest not Sacrifice else would I give it, thou delightest not in Burnt-Offerings, the Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit*; i. e. these are the most acceptable Sacrifices, for it does not follow, that because a broken Spirit is called a Sacrifice of God, that therefore, he had not appointed other Sacrifices.

Nor was any Rite more evidently commanded of God, than that of *Circumcision*, see *Gen. xvii. 14. And the uncircumcised Man-Child, whose Flesh of his Foreskin is not circumcised, that Soul shall be cut of from his People: he hath broken my Covenant.* comp. *Exod. iv. 24. 27.* And this Rite was to be applied at *eight Days* old, *Gen. xvii. 12.* And yet this very *Positive Command*, enforced with so strong a Sanction, gave way to *Mercy* for near forty Years together. See *Josh. v. 5. Now all the People that came out were circumcised; but all the People that were born in*
the

the Wilderiness by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. Conformable to this, the *Prophets* whenever they mention Positive Commands, and Moral Duties together, speak with comparative Contempt on the positive: so *Jer. iv. 4. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the Foreskin of your Hearts.* q. d. your other Circumcision is no manner of Security to you against my fury, therefore circumcise your Hearts, which has an infinitely greater tendency to prevent your ruin; and again, ver. 14. *O Jerusalem wash thine Heart from Wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.* q. d. Your external Washings, or Baptisms, will have no Manner of avail, nor stand in any stead, but your Heart must be baptized, or washed from Wickedness. To the same Purpose is *Mich. vi. 9. He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good.* Here Sacrifices, and Offerings, tho' positively commanded, are rejected, despised, and trampled upon, as what have no real Goodness in them; no Good when compared with Moral Righteousness, *i. e.* doing justly, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with God.

Besides our Lord himself shews that Purity did not lie in Meats, but those things which proceed from the Heart defile him; this he said to *Jews*, who were yet under Laws that distinguished between *clean and unclean Meats.* *Matt. xv. 10, 21.*

Nay, even of their *Sabbath*, which he had so strictly commanded them to keep as a Rest from

from all *Manual* or *Bodily* Labour, yet this very Institution was to give way to another more *ancient* Rite, even that of *Circumcision*; See *John* vii. 22, 23. *Moses gave unto you Circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the Fathers, and ye on the Sabbath Day circumcise a Man. If a Man on the Sabbath Day receive circumcision, that the Law of Moses should not be broken, &c.* And in *Mark* ii. 27, he declares, *that the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*: which surely he could not have said of moral Rectitude, or of eternal and inflexible Truth.

We should therefore expect to find upon this extraordinary Example, viz. Our looking upon the absolute Necessity of the one, and the manifest Inferiority and Subserviency of the other, becoming manifest Unrighteousness and Injustice towards God——Upon this I say, we must expect to find some manifest Foundation, on which to support positive Commands, under the Gospel Dispensation. But alas! never did the sacred Writers once think of making the Eucharist, or even Baptism, to stand in any stronger Light, when compared with moral Righteousness, than in a manifest Inferiority and Subserviency, and this without the least Unrighteousness or Injustice towards God.

That famous Passage of St. Peter's of Baptism now saving us, not by washing away the Filth of the Flesh, but the saving Effect arising from the Answer of a good Conscience towards

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wards God, is a sufficient Proof of the Difference to be put between *moral* Truth and *positive* Command. Nor would St. Paul have given so much Preference to his preaching the Gospel, and declar'd, *he was not sent* [so much] *to baptize*, 1 Cor. i. 17. if Baptism was not, in its own Nature, manifestly *inferior* even to that *Mean* of promoting moral Rectitude.

I have thus treated the Example, tho' it is suppos'd to be only a *plausible Reason* of neglecting and contemning positive Commands; forasmuch as this View of *positive Commands* does not appear to me to be a *plausible Reason* why any should neglect or condemn *positive Commands*; for whilst a Man keeps in his Eye the *absolute Necessity* of moral Rectitude, and sees, at the same time, the *manifest Subserviency* of positive Commands, he can never make this a Reason of neglecting or contemning them. So that the *Example* seems rather calculated to throw a false Light before the Eye of the Reader, by leading him to imagine, that the absolute Necessity of *moral Rectitude*, and the manifest Inferiority and Subserviency of *positive Commands*, is but a *plausible and deceptive* View of them: whereas it is the most just and proper way of stating the *real* Difference, that does and must for ever subsist between them.

Besides, there are those who have in plain Terms asserted, " That positive Institutions demand an equal Regard from Christians, " with

“with moral and eternal Truth.” This is indeed to give the *Handmaid* or *Servant*, an equal Authority with her *Mistress*; and must be looked upon as a Principle that confounds and inverts the very Nature and Difference of Things.

For, was this a true Principle, one would imagine, that the Reason of *positive Commands* should be as plain and intelligible, as are moral and eternal Truths; and if so, that they should enforce and oblige as *early*; which being the Case, a Reason should be assigned why the *Lord's Supper* and *Baptism* are not attended to, as soon as the Child of a Christian becomes a *moral Agent*: for they having an equal Claim or Demand, must be equally plain and evident, or equally promulged and notified, and their Obligation implying an equal Force, must suppose a *moral Necessity* of submitting to, or observing them.

Moreover, if we but preserve the Distinction between *moral Righteousness* and *positive Commands*, tho' they are from *JESUS*, those *positive Commands* have a manifest *Inferiority*, being only of Value, as they are *subservient* to moral Rectitude; they cannot therefore be of *equal Obligation* on Christians. They cannot, whilst they continue what they are, *viz. positive Commands*. — Nay, to attend upon *positive Institutions*, under the Notion of their being of equal Obligation with moral Rectitude,

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tude, would be to *pervert* and *abuse* the very nature and design of them. It would be to regard the *means* as the *end*, to which they are only in friendship instituted as the Means, tho' they are such, without which, it is possible the *end* may be attained.— *

Object. But it is farther asserted, *viz.* that,
 “ in positive Institutions, the *mere* will
 “ of the law-giver, considering who
 “ the law-giver is, is a sufficient rea-
 “ son for the Subject's obedience. It
 “ is this that makes it righteousness to
 “ comply, and unrighteousness, that is,
 “ immorality, to refuse obedience. If
 “ there be good proof of a divine in-
 “ stitution, good proof that God requires
 “ us to use a certain *rite* or *ceremony*,
 “ tho' in our eyes ever so mean, and
 “ tho' we ourselves are not let into the
 “ Design of it; yet to refuse compliance
 “ in such a case, is downright disobedi-
 “ ence, and a violation of God's authority;
 “ which is as certainly immorality, tho'
 “ of a *different kind*, as the breaking
 “ what we usually call a moral precept †.

* See Mr. FOSTER's *Usefulness, &c. of the Christian Revelation*, p. 275. “ Men shall not be condemned for not under-
 “ standing or seeing the reason and obligation of *positive* pre-
 “ cepts; because they have attained to the *great end* of Religi-
 “ on, which all the *subordinate* duties of it must be designed to
 “ promote.”—

† Pag. 19.

It is true, that *authorative obligation* lays hold of those who are under the commands of a superior, he being one who has a right and authority to prescribe Rules to them.—But then this is not of the nature of *rational obligation*, or that which arises from reason abstractly taken, or the manifest nature and truth of things. It has not the same degree of perspicuity, force, and obligation, as being *just, true, and merciful*; and can in itself have no moral strength, any farther than it has a suitability to promote, *order, rectitude*, or manifests the *good will* of the Law-giver; for *mere will*, becoming the reason of subjection, as it makes the immorality of a *different kind*, as the breaking what we usually call a *moral precept*: so it must be owned to be a *different kind* of obligation. And if it should appear that moral obligation does at any time *take place* of positive institution, or oblige the *Rite* to give way, then it must be confessed, that it is not of *equal* claim and authority; and this we have already seen it does. *Besides*, it does so in the case before us; *for example*, can we not suppose that as to the *Lord's-Supper* and *Baptism*, tho' these appear to be positive Rites belonging to the Christian Church; yet, a Man fully persuaded of their obligation, may see great reason, at times, to forego and not attend the celebration of them. Nay, that the celebration of them only becomes his Duty in certain given circumstances. For he may be so situated, as not to be able to commemorate the death of

his Lord, in the *instituted usage*, or method of commemoration.—And altho' he was persuaded of the obligation to Baptism, *nay*, to the having it repeated when of *adult* age, he might be so situate, as to be unable to have it applied to him. Or if he had an opportunity of finding men supple enough to indulge to his opinion, he might be in such an habit of body, as would render it unfit as hazardous to be baptised, *i.e.* if he looked upon *plunging* in water as *essential* to baptism.

But it is, or may be said, “ That should he be so circumstanced, that none near him would *dip* him, it would then be his Duty to travel till he found one.”—

To this it may be replied, that if he were in *poor* and *low* Circumstances, he would perceive that this would be to neglect making a proper Provision for his Family; and therefore if he acted a rational, moral part, he would look upon himself as excused; tho' he was fully persuaded that such *sort* of Baptism was instituted by his Lord. And here, every one must see that *moral obligation*, taking place of *positive* Institution, must determine the *positive* command to be of inferior nature and force.—

Object. But again it is said, or might be said,
 “ That the man should travel to be Baptised, tho' ever so far; *nay*, that he ought rather to prefer a long journey
 C 2 “ to

“ to a short one, since herein he would
 “ have the *Example* of his Lord—who
 “ gave an instance of that piety and reve-
 “ rence towards God, which shined forth
 “ in all other parts of his life, by under-
 “ going the fatigue of a journey, *on pur-
 “ pose to do the greater honour to a di-
 “ vine Institution* *.” And again, “ That
 “ it was his *meat to do the will of him
 “ that sent him, &c.* was verified par-
 “ ticularly in the action of coming to
 “ *John’s* baptism, before he took his mi-
 “ nistry upon him ; otherwise he would
 “ not have travelled from *Galilee* to *Jor-
 “ dan* to be baptized of *John*, when it
 “ might easily have been ordered, that
 “ *John* should come to him” †, which
 “ long journey might and would have
 “ been spared, if the Son of God had
 “ not resolved to shew the *greatest re-
 “ spect* to the command of his heavenly
 “ Father, in the Commission given to
 “ *John* the Baptist” ‡.

From these views, it would certainly be in-
 cumbent, not only on a person situated at a
 great distance from a plunging baptizer [if
John is understood to have been one] but it
 must become universally a *rule of direction* to
 all such, who would emphatically shew their
 regard to Jesus, as an *Exemplar*, viz. their
 chusing to travel a *long*, rather than take a
short way to their baptism ; forasmuch, as his

* Pag. 3.

† Pag. 14.

‡ Pag. 3.

long journey would have been spared, or might easily have been spared, but that he resolved to shew the *greatest respect* to the command, by the length of the way which he went to his baptism.——

It must therefore surely express *too great freedom* with our Lord's example, as above strongly described, to weaken the obligation of it, as we find done *, where it is said “ I do not mean, by recommending the active zeal, that we should out of a voluntary humility, put ourselves to inconveniencies for the sake of that, which we may as well perform without difficulty : I do not mean, that a man should streighten himself for that which he can easily come at”.

What? did our Lord *verify particularly* his regard to the will of him that sent him, by travelling *so far* to his baptism, “ When it might easily have been ordered otherwise ; when the journey might and would have been spared, had he not by it designed to shew the *greatest respect* to the command of his heavenly Father” ; and can this be a proper christian-like conclusion drawn from it, *viz.* “ That we are not to understand this active zeal as *recommendatory* to his followers ; and that we are not to put ourselves to inconveniencies for the sake of that, which we may as well perform without difficulty ”?— Surely this can be no just, no fair conclusion.—

* Pag. 15.

But

But if it be, may I not take the same liberty with his example, upon the Supposition of his being *dipped* or *plunged*? that active zeal of his in plunging quite over head in water, should not put me to the inconveniency for the sake of that, which I may as well perform without difficulty! —

Object. “But it is said, that *Baptizo* constantly signifies in the New Testament, to *dip* or *plunge*; if we may be allowed to explain those general passages, wherein no circumstances are particularly mentioned, by others which are very plain and clear; which in all reason we ought to do*.” And therefore if we would be baptized at all, we must be dipped.

What the meaning is of the above assertion, I cannot conceive, since the word is certainly often used in the *New Testament*, where plunging can by no means be understood: particularly, 1 *Cor.* x. 2. Which passage has sometimes been made use of to explain or illustrate *Men's putting on Christ by baptism*: viz. *As the Israelites were all baptized unto Moses in the Cloud and in the Sea.* Which if we allow to be a good illustration, as I think it is, than we have an idea of Baptism without plunging. And not only so, but we have an Idea of the Subjects of baptism, being *Parents with their Children.* The new Testament gives us in this place an

* Page 27.

express instance of Infant Baptism, which should have some weight with those who make use of this Text as explanatory of the Christians putting on Christ by baptism; but this by the way. It is an undoubted truth that *Baptizo* does not in the New Testament, always signify to *dip* or *plunge*: so far from it, that in a small tract on *plunging*, lately published, it is shewn, that it is only *taking the thing for granted*; for there is no manner of proof that either *John* or the disciples of *Jesus* did ever plunge when they baptized:—

Object. But it is yet said, “ That there is no
 “ accounting for such Words (as express
 “ mens going down into the water, and
 “ coming up out of the water) if baptism
 “ could be supposed to consist in sprink-
 “ ling a few drops of water, or even
 “ pouring a large quantity upon some
 “ part of the body—and that *John’s*
 “ baptizing *Jesus* himself εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην,
 “ into *Jordan*, as it is emphatically ex-
 “ pressed, *Mar.* i. 9.* clears the Doctrine.

Why this should determine the Point I see not, the *particle* being so render’d rather seems to darken than clear the doctrine of plunging, *John* baptized *Jesus* into *Jordan*. The *preposition* is intelligible when understood to express a being baptized *into* the Religion of *Moses*, or of *Christ*; so putting on the one or the other. But *John’s* baptizing *Jesus* INTO *Jor-*

* Pag. 28.

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dan, has something uncouth in it, as emphatical as it is, unless it be mystically understood, that he baptized him into the *Faith* or *Profession* of *Jordan*!—Tho' it must be owned, that the word is render'd into *Rom. vi. 3, 4. into his Death*, and it is the same word rendered *in*, even so we also should walk *in* newness of life. But in this *Gentleman's* sense, it should be thus rendered—*we should walk INTO newness of life*, as being more emphatical. So *Acts ii. 38. be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ INTO the remission of sins. And in Matth. xv. 24. I am not sent, but INTO the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And in Acts vii. 53. instead of who have received the law BY the disposition of angels, to render it more emphatical, we should read it, who have received the law INTO the disposition of angels.*——To go *to*, to be baptized *in*, or *by Jordan*, seems to be full as emphatical, and as proper a rendring of the preposition, and no difficulty will attend the description, tho' we should not suppose our Lord *plunged* when he was baptized.

Besides, is it not amazing that among the many New Testament accounts of baptism, not one word should ever be dropped about their *laying aside*, or *changing* their garments, if they were all plunged!—Since when our Lord used baptism only to the feet of his disciples, *St. John* tells us, that he *laid aside* his garment.—*John xiii. 4.*—and can we suppose that 3000 could be *plunged* in the streets of *Jerusalem*

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and no hint of the conveniencies for it, or of the *decency* or *indecenty* of the performance, or administration of the rite?—*Acts* ii. 41.—

Well, but if plunging should not be essential to baptism, nor the Institution be any other than a *positive* institution, yet, children, *i. e.* infants cannot be the subjects of it. That they should, can by no means be allowed. For,

Object. “ The mentioning *profelyte baptism*
 “ among the *Jews*, appears to have no
 “ foundation, for, that there was no such
 “ practice among the *Jews* in our Savi-
 “ our’s time, as the baptizing of profelytes,
 “ is, at least very probable, from the
 “ *Pharisees* asking *John the Baptist*, *John*
 “ i. 25. *why baptizest thou, if thou be not*
 “ *the Christ, neither Elias, neither that*
 “ *Prophet*. What authority hast thou to
 “ bring up a new religious ceremony?
 “ *Mat. xxi. 25. The baptism of John whence*
 “ *was it ; from heaven, or of men? John*
 “ i. 33. *John says, that God sent him to*
 “ *baptize with Water* *.

That these texts should determine against the use of *water baptism* among the *Jews*, does not at all appear. As to the *first* text, the Question there put does not naturally, or without force, afford the Sense given it. *viz. What Authority hast thou to bring up a new religious ceremony?* It runs thus, *why baptizest thou, if thou be*

* Page 46.

not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? which plainly supposes, that they had some notion of the rite as *sacred*: and thought it fit to be used by the *Messiah*, as the *initiatory ceremonial* into his Kingdom; and nothing could be more natural, if it should be allowed that the *Jews* had thus proselyted.

Nor does *Mat. xxi. 25.* give any further Reason against such practice. *They could not have gloried in it, that John's baptism was borrowed from them.* For altho' they had had the *custom*, or *usage* of baptizing Proselytes: yet they could not say that this was an authority for *John* to baptize the true *Israelites*, or the People who worshiped the true God; and that he should so initiate them into another Kingdom, or polity. Or to say the least, they might possibly know of this usage, and understand it as what might be with propriety used, but were very cautious how they condemned themselves.

As to the third text, *John i. 33.* *John* might well say, *that God sent him to baptize with Water*, tho' they had practised the method of baptizing proselytes, for the reason above mentioned. And *besides* he is opposing his baptism to the baptism of *Jesus*. So that to suppose they had had no such practice among them, would render it very difficult to reconcile the *entire silence* of the Historians about the *Jews* objecting, or enquiring into the nature of the rite.

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And altho' the account is no more than a *Rabbinical* or *Talmudical* account given not 'till 150, or 200 years after our Saviour's time*, when a collection was made of their customs, and traditions, this will not lessen its authority, but rather confirm it; for, the *Jews*, from the time of Christ's crucifixion 'till now, had been *bitter* enemies to the christians; and therefore it cannot be reasonably supposed that they would invent an usage, which would so greatly confirm and establish the *christian-baptismal-rite*; and so well account for the introduction of it: and yet this would manifestly be the case, if we suppose those writers only invented the accounts given us of their ancient manner of profelyting. Nay, if we suppose that they invented this account, we must suppose them to have paid a voluntary and known high compliment to the christians, who they knew universally initiated by *baptism*: a Supposition, not easily to be made by any thoughtful, sober, unprejudiced mind.

I shall next take some notice of these writings as I find their character from the hands of some *considerable Authors*; and as *Maimonides* is so often quoted by them, let us first attend to his character, as given by Dr. *Prideaux*; he says, "that out of the Babylonish Talmud, *Maimonides* hath made an abstract, containing only the resolutions or determinations made therein on every case, without the descants, disputes, fables and other trash under which

* Page 47. See *Prideaux* Con. Part I. Page 326, 327.

“ they lay buried in that vast load of rubbish.
 “ This work is entitled by him *Yad Hach*
 “ *Azakab*, and is one of the compleatest di-
 “ gests of law that was ever made, I mean not
 “ as to the matter, but in respect only of the
 “ clearness of the Stile and method in which
 “ it is composed, the filthy mass of dirt from
 “ under which he dug it, and the comprehen-
 “ sive manner in which he has digested the
 “ whole. Other *Jews* have attempted the
 “ like work, but none have been able to ex-
 “ ceed or come nigh him herein. And for
 “ this and other of his writings he is deserved-
 “ ly esteemed the *best Author* among them*.”
 So *Culverwel* calls *Maimonides*, one of the
best among the *Jews* †, and a second *Moses* ‡.

“ Of their *Talmuds* some men have spoken
 “ and wrote with great acrimony as well as
 “ contempt, as tho’ they were nothing at all
 “ but an *heap of blasphemy*.” And from Dr.
Prideaux we may learn, that they had a great
 deal of trash in them. But they are not wholly
 to be thrown aside as of no Service, but must
 be allowed of very considerable use in explain-
 ing the Gospel History, as every one must
 own who reads with care Dr. *Lightfoot’s Har-*
mony of the New Testament. Thus he writes
 in 37 Sec. *On the Parable of the Sower*, “ that
 “ the *Talmuds* are abundantly full of this kind
 “ of Oratory, and so are generally all their an-
 “ cient writers: and they commonly enter up-
 “ on their parables with this preface, *a parable*:

* Connect. P. I. P. 328. † Disc. on light of nature P. 64. ‡ P. 120
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“ *To what is the thing like?* I believe there
 “ are many in the world, that have not been
 “ farther acquainted with the writings of the
 “ *Jews*, than what they have seen quoted by
 “ other writers, and yet are ready to censure
 “ them of lyes, and falshoods [which indeed
 “ they are not free from] meerly upon want
 “ of acquaintance with their *Stile of Parables*
 “ and *Hyperboles*”.

Our blessed Lord has plainly had a reference frequently to their customs and usages, as in that famous passage *Matt. v. 22.* a man's being angry with his brother without cause, exposing him to the judgment; calling him *Raca*, to the danger of the *Council*; and fool, to *Gebenna*: which could not have been so clearly understood but for those Rabbinnical writings, as appears by the *Preface to the Harmony* above-mentioned.

The account given by *St. Luke* of the priest *Zacharias* being of the *Course of Abia*, is not so clearly understood as from the *Talmuds*, both of which speak of the ordering of the *COURSES after the captivity.* Sec. 3d.

About *washings*, referred to, *Matt, xv. 2.* and *Mar. vii. 2, 3.* the Talmudical writings are made use of to good purpose*.

So our Lord's mentioning the *Canaanites*, or *Syro-phœnicians* under the Epithet of *DOGS*,

* Har. Sect. 50.

Matt.

Matt. xv. 26. is explained by these writings, which say, *that the nations of the world are compared to Dogs*†.

These writings explain the custom of *loosing the Shoe*, or *Shoe-latchet*, as being the practice of Servants in acknowledging their Masters. *Sec. 12.*

That *hyperbolical* representation of the power of faith in *removing mountains*, *Matt. xxi. 21.* is greatly illustrated by the *Talmuds*, *Sec. 74.*

That of *binding and loosing*. *Sec. 52.*

Matt. xxvi. 9. explained by means of the *Talmudical* writings, which remove the great Difficulty attending that Passage, *Har. p. 68.*

And great number of passages have light thrown upon them, as this excellent writer has made manifest.

Let us now take some notice of what he tells us, that these *Rabbinical* or *Talmudical* writers say of their ancient method of *admitting Proselytes**.

And this learned man says, “ that *Baptism* “ had been in long and common use among “ the *Jews* many generations before *John Baptist* came, they using this for admission of “ proselytes into the church, and baptizing “ men, women, and children for that end.

† *Har. Sec. 50.*

* *Note*, there is a wide difference between their character as *Historians*, and their character as *Religionists*. Their prejudices are not concern'd so much in matters of fact, as in their doctrinal Sentiments. Their writings in the present case may be allowed as good Authority. Since *no manner* of probable evidence lies against the practice, but *much* for it.

" *Talm. in Jobamoth, cap. 4 and Moym. in Is-*
 " *sure biab, cap. 13. A person is not a proselyte*
 " *'till he be both circumcised and baptized.*

" *Id. Chittubeth, cap. 1. A little one they*
 " *baptize by the Appointment of the consistory,*
 " *and Maym. in Avedin. cap. 8. An Israelite that*
 " *takes a little Heathen Child, or that finds an*
 " *Hebrew infant, and baptizeth him for a*
 " *proselyte, behold he is a proselyte.*

" Hence a ready-reason may be given, why
 " there is so little mention of baptizing infants
 " in the New Testament, that there is neither
 " plain precept nor example for it, as some
 " ordinarily plead: The reason is, because
 " there needed no such mention, baptizing of
 " Infants having been as ordinarily used in the
 " church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in
 " the christian church; it was enough to men-
 " tion that Christ established baptism for an
 " ordinance under the Gospel; and then,
 " who should be baptized was well enough
 " known, by the use of this ordinance of old:
 " Therefore it is a good plea, *because there is*
 " *no forbidding of the baptizing of infants in*
 " *the Gospel, ergo, they are to be baptized;*
 " for that having been in common usage among
 " the Jews, that infants should be baptized as
 " well as men or women. Our Saviour would
 " have given some *special prohibition*, if he
 " intended that they should have been exclu-
 " ded; so that *silence* in this case does ne-
 " cessarily

“ necessarily conclude approbation to have the
 “ practice continued, which had been used of
 “ old before.” *Harm.* p. 10.

Again, p. 76. “ Those of the *Heathens* who
 “ had come into the church of *Israel* and the
 “ true religion, had been inducted and sealed
 “ into it, by being *baptized*. *Talm.* in *Jebam*
 “ par. 4, &c. and so that proselyte Sacrament
 “ must be carried and continued among all na-
 “ tions, as a badge of homage and subjection
 “ to Christ, to whom all power is given—
 “ and of the profession of the true God, the
 “ Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, against all
 “ false Gods and false worship. Infants born
 “ of Christian parents are to bear this badge,
 “ tho’ when they undertake it, they under-
 “ stand not what they do, because none in
 “ Christian Families should continue without
 “ the note of homage to Christ’s sovereignty,
 “ and this distinctive mark against heathen-
 “ ism.—*he adds*,

“ DISCIPLINE was not of persons already
 “ taught, but to that end that they should be
 “ taught, and if the Disciples understood this
 “ word in Christ’s command after any other
 “ Sense, it was different from the sense of the
 “ word, which the nation had ever used and
 “ only used—the Sense therefore that many
 “ put upon these words, *viz.* that none are
 “ to be baptized but those that are thoroughly
 “ taught, is such a one as the Apostles and all
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"the Jewish nation had never known or heard
"of before." *ibid.*

The custom of thus profelyting, *Ainsworth* likewise asserts very expressly to be the doctrine of *Maimonides* and of the *Jewish Doctors* in general ; in his Notes on *Gen. xvii. 12.* " By three things, say they, did *Israel* enter into the covenant, by *circumcision*, and *baptism*, and *sacrifice*. *Circumcision* was in *Egypt*, as it is written, no uncircumcised shall eat thereof, *Exod. xii. 48.* *Baptism* was in the wilderness before the giving of the Law, as it is written, sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their cloaths, *Exod. xix. 10.* and *Sacrifice*, as it is said, and he sent young men of the sons of *Israel* which offered burnt-offerings, &c. *Exod. xxiv. 5.* and so in all ages, when an *Ethnick* is willing to enter into the covenant, and gather himself under the wings of the Majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he must be circumcised, and baptized, and bring a Sacrifice ; and if it be a woman, she must be baptised and bring a Sacrifice ; as it is written, *Num. xv. 15,* and as ye are, so shall the stranger be—there were many Profelytes in *David's* and *Solomon's Days*—and the Judges of the great *Sanhedrin* had a care of them ; they drove them not away after they were baptized, out of any Place, neither took they them near unto them, until their after-fruits appeared, *Maimony* in *Mishn. tom. 2.*

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“ in *Iffurei biah*, ch. xiii. S. 1—6. 11. 14, 15.
 “ Hereupon baptism was nothing strange to
 “ the *Jews*, when *John* the Baptist began his
 “ ministry. They made question of his person,
 “ but not of the thing itself.”——

Dr. *Lightfoot* says, Sect. 12. of his *Harm.*
 “ The Pharisees came to question *John* about
 “ the authority whereby he baptized, making
 “ no strangeness at baptizing, which had been
 “ so long in use among them.”

Object. But it is said, “ that there is not
 “ the least reason to believe, that Christ
 “ would chuse one of those ceremonies,
 “ and adopt it for a religious institution
 “ of his own, which these men, or their
 “ fore-fathers, of their own heads had
 “ superstitiously framed, and in the prac-
 “ tice whereof they offered to God a
 “ Service which he never required*.”

It might be sufficient, in answer, to say, that
 this is only an assertion, and has no manner
 of proof belonging to it; for this is *certain*,
 that the *Jews* were allowed to admit of prose-
 lytes from among the *Gentiles*; and that there
 were actually many such among them, but
 that they should be admitted exactly upon
 the *same* terms with the *native-born Jews*,
 is not reasonable to imagine; because they were
 esteemed *impure* and *unboly*, and it is but na-
 tural to suppose, tho’ we have not now in the

* See Mr. *Burroughs*’s Two Disc. on positive Instit. p. 48.

Jewish Code any very-particular and express account of the ceremonials of the *Profelytes* admission; yet we may by a just analogy conclude, that since WASHING was appointed for the legal purification of a DEFILED Jew, it was but reasonable to expect that the same purifying Rite, should be applied to a Gentile Convert, who was looked upon by them as naturally defiled, and therefore as bearing some likeness in his condition to a Jew, under legal pollution and uncleanness.—

It is but reasonable to conclude, that God required this sort of ceremonial admission; since he had so peculiarly distinguished the natives of *Israel*, as an holy people, and appointed Water-baptisms for their purifications.—so that we see, even at this day, full as clear reason from the ceremonial *Jewish* Laws, for the application of *Baptism* to the profelytes, as any man in the world can give us of the christian-infant-seed being excluded the baptismal rite, because not expressly mentioned as the subjects of it.—I might have said much more reason.

Object. But these, *i. e.* infants, must be excluded, because, “ the Gospel constitution
“ is compleat in itself; and every part of
“ it receives its force, and becomes what
“ it is, from the mind and will of
“ the constitutor; nor is it left to us
“ to supply its supposed deficiencies, out
“ of an antiquated constitution, which
“ this was designed to abrogate. I say,

“ its supposed deficiencies. For whereas
 “ in the Case before us, some good Chri-
 “ stians suppose, that because Infants
 “ were circumcised of old, by virtue of
 “ an expresse command, therefore infants
 “ ought to be baptized now, tho’ there
 “ is no command for it; the argument
 “ is directly against them, besides that
 “ they have no precept to proceed by.
 “ For the truth of the case is this: that
 “ the circumcision of infants, if it can
 “ be said to have made them members of
 “ the church, must be a proof of the
 “ weak, infant state of the church in those
 “ times; *when the heir was under tutors*
 “ *and governors, until the time appointed*
 “ *by the father.* But it is an honour to
 “ the christian church, a proof of its state
 “ of maturity and full growth, that none
 “ but grown persons, making profession
 “ of their own faith, and of their own
 “ resolution to obey the mind of God,
 “ are received as visible members of it.
 “ This is, with me, besides the total silence
 “ of Scripture in the case, a good argu-
 “ ment against the baptizing of infants *.

This remarkable paragraph is to shew, that
 there is no room for conjectural inferences from
 the constitution of the *Mosaic Law*, or from
 the *Abrahamic covenant* which went before it.—

* Two disc. p. 42.

What the infant state of the *Jews* has to do with the *Abrahamic* covenant, as an antiquated constitution, designed to be abrogated, I cannot see. Circumcision, the grand point in view in this argument, was not of *Moses*, but of the *Fathers*; and therefore, as we have already seen, one of the most express and strong *positive commands* under the Mosaic constitution, was to *vail* to it, *John* vii. 22, 23. It therefore will not follow, that because children under the *Mosaic* dispensation were admitted as parties in the *Abrahamic Covenant*, that therefore, this was an evidence of the *weak* and *infant state* of the church in those times. On the contrary, the *Abrahamic Covenant* was the highest and most spiritual part of their privileges, and came not in by *Moses*, but was to continue to the end of time, it being the very Christian covenant, the same in nature and essence; see *Gal.* iii. 16, 17, 18. Nor can the most *raised figure* that any language will admit of, take away the force of the argument.— A *Covenant* it was, a covenant *confirmed* of God in Christ 430 years before the Law, and which that Law could not *disannul*. A covenant, referring to, and including Christ the promised Messiah. The *Seal* of which covenant, infants had received under the dispensation of *Moses*, which surely could not be an argument of the *weakness* of this state.—

Nor could it be any honour to the christian church, should it deny *infants* to be parties in that

that same Covenant of which they always had been parties; and yet never assign one reason why they are unfit, or *less capable* now than they ever have been. But,

It is said, "none but persons of full growth, making profession of their own faith, and of their own Resolution to obey the mind of God, are received as VISIBLE members of it*."

This *worthy Gentleman*, I am obliged to think, did not intend to monopolize to his party the whole church; for none but *Antipoedobaptists*, and those who deny water-baptism, do deny Church-membership to infants,—and yet the *Terms* would lead one to suppose, that none but the *adultly-baptized* are *visible* members.—But when I consider his known *Catholicism*, and readiness for *mixed Communion*, I must understand him, as only supposing this to be the plain, settled, certain sense of the Christian Constitution; and even then, I am under some difficulties how to reconcile receiving none but *adultly-baptized* persons as *visible* members, and yet joining with *Poedobaptists* as *visible* members!—

Indeed, I find him giving this comment on *Acts* viii. 37. *viz. which supposes, none can be baptized unless they believe* †, "when the Eunuch desired to be baptized, he was told by Philip, that if he believed with all his heart,

* Page 26, 27.

† Pag. 43.

"he might; plainly intimating that if he did
"not believe, he might not be baptized."

Let this answer of Philip's be made a rule of Baptism, and then none must be baptized, but what believe *with all their heart*. For this, and nothing short of this is in the answer. But if so, no insincere person should ever be baptized. And will any pretend to say, they are judges of the subjects of baptism?—But if they will not, and at the same time, say, that all persons that have received *adult baptism* are the visible members of Christ's church; one may venture to say, *that it is as great an honour to the christian church, and as great a Proof of its state of MATURITY, and FULL GROWTH, to have Infants acknowledged to be its visible members, as numbers of the other sort of visible members; nay, much more so.*

I might further remark, that according to these very advocates for *adult Baptism*, the rite itself was introduced and applied during this *weak and infant State* of the Church, viz. under the *Mosaic State*, and before the *Christian Kingdom* was actually come. It should therefore follow, upon their own reasoning, that if the Season in which the rite was instituted would *diminish* or *destroy* the fitness of it, then *water-baptism* could not have been proper for a *more perfect* and *mature State* of the Church. But we find that altho' *John* introduced this rite, as baptizing into a Kingdom that was only coming, yet when it was come, the *same rite*

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was continued, tho' it had been administred in that *infant, embrio* State, by a man of whom our Lord says, that the *least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he*. Strange! that yet, this rite must not be allowed to infants!

Object. " But it seems *Baptism* must have
 " a view to repentance; it is designed to
 " exhibit the hope of the pardon of sins:
 " it denotes a personal profession of our
 " believing the doctrine of *Jesus**.

We deny not but grown persons profelyted to the Christian faith, should express their belief in the doctrine of Christ; which may be looked upon by them as the *doctrine of remission*, as it is so clearly understood by the Gospel. But yet, this will be far from giving us any just notion of a person's having his sins *washed away by Baptism*, who has been from his childhood educated in principles of virtue, and upon his consciousness of having at any time offended, has been truly penitent, and shown it in *new* obedience; it will not show us how such a person finds baptism to be a *washing away of his Sins*. And yet this seems to be much dilated upon, and expressed with great emphasis. It would therefore be of use in the debate to know, whether an actual pardon and remission, as well as an instantaneous *cleansing* efficacy does attend the baptism of such person? whether his sins were not washed away before? and whether he did not before baptism as truly and properly re-

* Page 26, 27.

pent, believe, and obey the Christian doctrine, in every instance that could then be expressed by him? The darkness and obscurity of such representations of the importance and efficacy of water-baptism on the adult christian, by washing away his Sins, will allow one to *doubt* of the fitness of the *rite*, as so applied by adult-baptizers; and especially, as they have neither *precept* nor *precedent* for their practice.

Which one would think, might easily have been had, " for it deserves to be remarked :
" that even in the epistles themselves, tho'
" written at a time, when many of the first
" converts, in the churches to which they
" were directed, must have had children grown
" up to years of understanding; yet the A-
" postles make no mention of any being bap-
" tized*."

My view of the doctrine will account for this, which supposes, a great probability of their baptizing them whilst infants: of their whole households being baptized, in virtue of the Parent or Head's professing to believe the Christian doctrine and being himself baptized, as we are assured was the case; so that there was no need for the mention of the baptism of grown children. The multitudes of men and women, the thousands that were together converted, are not likely to have been without their infants with them: it is improbable they should separate from their infants at their baptism.

* Page 59.

And they had as good a right to being baptized with them, as their fore-fathers had, when infants, of being baptized into *Moses* with their parents in the cloud and in the sea. Nor did the *promise* exclude them; the *promise* mention'd *Acts* ii. 38. as belonging to them and to their children, is the argument used by *St. Peter*, for their submitting to baptism, their immediately submitting to it; and therefore if their children were not the immediate subjects of baptism, I cannot see the force of the motive. But it is reasonable *q. d.* "that you should be
 " baptized, for not only you, but your chil-
 " dren are proper subjects of it, nay, even the
 " very heathens that are not yet profelyted, are
 " within the promise." But if the promise being to their children, only intended that at adult age they might be baptized, it being said to be alike to them and to their children, would have been no argument for their *immediately* submitting to baptism.

It is indeed called a *poor objection* * that we have no example of christian parents baptizing their children; but as poor as it is, no reasonable man in the world who views the interests of Children during *former* dispensations, would look upon it, as of so very contemptible a nature. If children had been denied their ancient privileges, and cut off from being parties of the *same Covenant*, under an easier *rite* of admission, we might have expected some very strong and clear prohibition, with the reason assigned for it.

* Page 58.

Object. It is yet objected, " that this is the
" only way or rule of professing christia-
" nity, viz. by baptism*."

An objection I despair of ever forming any clear Idea concerning its meaning or import. But it seems that because *baptism* was the proper public *rite* to the first converts, whereby they acknowledged the doctrine of *Jesus*; therefore all those persons must be in the *same* circumstances, and the *rite* be as properly applied to them who have been training up from their infancy in the faith of *Jesus*, and have discovered a serious, voluntary attendance on his word and worship. Methinks, to talk of these men, as not having made a *profession* of the Christian religion, who have for years been forming their tempers and lives by its doctrine and examples, is to talk in a strain the most unintelligible and confounding! In a word, if the *rite* of baptism be not applicable to the *infant Seed* of christian parents, I can discern no manner of reason for applying it to their *adult* descendants.

For the infant Seed of professing Christians have the most manifest right to the institution.

Object. " But it is said, that we are not to
" imagine ourselves at liberty to neg-
" lect one of Christ's ordinances, because
" we have submitted to another, when

* Page 60.

“ it is so plain, that our Lord himself appointed
 “ another ordinance for this very purpose (*viz.*
 “ professing of our Christianity) *after* he had
 “ instituted that of the Supper*.”—

I have found some writers very fond of excluding infants the baptismal Rite, from the *order of the words of Institution*, *viz. teaching or discipling*, going before *baptizing*.—But surely from this description of the *order of time*, in which it is here said, that the *Supper and baptism* were instituted, one might by *analogy* conclude strongly on the side of receiving the Eucharist before baptism; for our *author* seems to intimate, that it is the duty of persons who have celebrated the memorials of Christ's death, not to look upon that as a sufficient instance of their professing christianity, but they must after this be baptized; *when it is so plain, that our Lord himself appointed another distinct ordinance for this very purpose, after he had instituted that of the Supper*.—Upon which principle one may have a little glimpse how it may be consistent to hold with *mixed communion*, and yet not look upon the *Pœdobaptists* in it as visible Members of the Church of Christ.

Nevertheless, as *John's Baptism* has been acknowledged to be the *rite* to initiate into the *Messiah's Kingdom*, and that our Lord *fulfilled all righteousness*, from his being baptized by him, so one may safely conclude, that notwithstanding our Lord did, *after* his resurrec-

* Page 61.

tion, continue to recommend baptism, yet it was an institution *prior* to these instructions; tho' not understood with so great a latitude, as to the subjects of it. And therefore, such need not distress themselves on account of their having been baptized before they have received the Eucharist.

I shall only add one more remark, and that is deduced from the principle of this *defence* of *positive Institutions*, viz. that a Christian parent, who but weakly discerns the doctrine of Baptism, as including infants among its Subjects, "if he does but see good proof that God requires him to use that certain rite or ceremony, tho' in his eyes it be *ever so mean*, and tho' *he is not let into the Design of it*, yet to refuse compliance in such a case, is downright disobedience, and a violation of God's authority, which is as certainly immorality, tho' of a different kind, as the breaking what we usually call a moral precept.

It is incumbent on those who see this *Rite*, in a light much clearer than the main body of Christians do, that they shew us some reason why *infants* should be excluded from being parties in a covenant, in which they had been ever owned from its first being made with *Abraham*.—

That they shew us a reason why the *Jews* were so silent about it, and made no complaints.

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That if we must discredit the *Rabbinical* accounts of profelyting, why we may not expect some more substantial reasons for rejecting them in this particular?

We expect likewise to be shewn what impartments are made by Baptism to a grown person, that an infant is not capable of receiving.—

And why the children, infant children of Christian parents may not be baptized now in virtue of the parent's profession of his faith, as well as whole households evidently were upon the faith of their *head*, in the apostolic age?

And that if Baptism is an *initiating* Rite, how it can be said to be *so*, when not applied to persons who profess the Christian Religion, till numbers of years after they have made such profession?

And what is the true standard of moral qualification for baptism? or, that if adult-baptism is of so much importance, as to be an *essential* in the Christian character; how it comes to be so disputable a point? or, why *Adult-Baptism*, and *Plunging* were not more manifest.—

Let it also be shewn, that the baptizing of infants is not a proper instance of their parents professing their faith in Christ, and as proper a pre-engagement on children to be the Lord's

as that of *Abraham's* circumcising his children and family, was of his faith in God, and in order that they might believe; for tho' *Abraham* believed that he and his children, or family, might be circumcised, yet his offspring or family were apparently circumcised, that they might believe: so that the Christian *Poedobaptist* in baptizing his infant seed, is manifestly conforming to the method in which men were originally taken into the covenant.——

Once more, how plunging should be looked upon as *essential* to Baptism, and of so much importance, when the *clearest account* given of it, will at least admit of a different Sense, without any absurdity, and may be understood to *sprinkle* or *pour*; as was the *Baptism* of the *Israelites*, and the *Baptism* of the Spirit?

These are some of those things which should be cleared up and explained to us, and would bid much fairer for Success, than calling in question the *capacity* or *integrity* of all that declare for infant-baptism.——

But if upon the most labour'd enquiry, it cannot be shewn, that infants are less the care of heaven than in former ages, and that the *Rite* was never forbidden them, but probably was applied to them by *John* and the *Disciples* of *Jesus*, as well as by the bulk of Christians in all ages. It must then shew too great freedom to burlesque and ridicule the practice; and will discover an unpardonable insolence to charge
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the advocates of infant-baptism with selfish and temporary worldly views, as the reason of their attachment; for surely, they may have minds as well disposed to bear reproaches, and to undergo contempt, as those of the *Anti-poedobaptists* persuasion! and from the taste of the age, I cannot but think, that the serious *Poedobaptist* stands as much exposed to the scoff and sneer of men; for it is almost enough to give any thing a good grace, that it has any oddness or peculiarity in it.—

P O S T S C R I P T.

WHAT has been offered, in the beginning of this *Appendix*, under the distinction of *positive command* and *moral righteousness* or *obligation*, might be farther supported from what Mr. *Burroughs* has said, p. 10. where he asserts, “that it is a downright
“ absurdity and contradiction, *in its own na-*
“ *ture*, to reject positive Institutions on the ac-

“ count of their being *only subservient to moral*
“ *purposes*; for if they are at all *subservient*,
“ that is a good reason why we should obey
“ them.” And no doubt this is a just way of treating positive institutions. But then, how this should ever be esteemed a *plausible reason* for neglecting them, when it is a *down-right absurdity and contradiction*, in its own nature, to *reject* them on account of their being *only subservient to moral purposes*, seems diffi-

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difficult to make appear—on the contrary, one would be apt to conclude, that the *down-right absurdity and contradiction* of the thing, would forbid its ever becoming a *plausible* reason, in the very same point of view, *viz. the absolute necessity of the one, and the manifest subserviency of the other.*

The above citation is made, in order to shew, that I have the same sentiments with Mr. B. about *positive institutions*, where he is clear and abstracted in his view of them: and am persuaded with him, “that with respect to *external testimony*, they stand upon the same foot, as the doctrine to which they refer.” p. 8. for he that said, *I am the resurrection and the life!* also said, *this do in remembrance of me; as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, shew ye the Lord's death till he come, &c.*—But his conclusion, p. 13. *viz. “that if our Lord had been baptized without his own consent or knowledge, he could not have been said therein to have fulfilled all righteousness,”* I take to be a mere quibble; for Mr. B. should to the purpose have shewn, that our Lord's having been *circumcised*, was not a *fulfilling* righteousness, as well as his being *baptized*; and that the rite of circumcision, which was a fulfilling of righteousness, was performed with his *consent and knowledge.*

Another observation might be made, *viz.* that Mr. B's *first discourse relating to positive*

*tive institutions, lays the greatest stress upon
 Christ's fulfilling all righteousness, in his being
 baptized of John; of consequence, the people's
 being baptized of him, must be looked upon
 as an act of righteousness in them.—And yet,
 upon his own principles, advanced in his se-
 cond Discourse, this fulfilling of righteousness
 has no very obvious foundation; for John had
 neither precept nor precedent for water-baptism,
 no such thing was ever practised among the
 Jews, and John came baptizing with no
 other credentials, but a private impulse! he
 told the people indeed that God sent him to
 baptize; but he wrought no miracle to con-
 firm his mission.—So that how the Law and
 the Prophets were fulfilled by being baptized
 of John, if it had not been the ancient me-
 thod of admitting profelytes by water-baptism,
 is yet to be accounted for.—And surely there
 must have been requisite some more explicate
 rule, than a private impulse, or such an em-
 phasis would not have been laid upon it—
 but our Lord's fulfilling all righteousness, by
 being baptized of John, must have a refe-
 rence to the same doctrine he taught of him-
 self, Matth. v. 17. *Think not that I am come
 to destroy the LAW or the PROPHETS: I am
 not come to destroy, but to fulfill.* and as well as*

The END.

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A Farther
DEFENCE
OF
INFANT-BAPTISM:
WHEREIN

The INFANTS Right, upon the Parent's Faith, is illustrated by those MIRACLES which *Jesus* performed—Their Claim to *Baptism* farther supported, from their being GOD'S HERITAGE—The Commission to go teach, baptizing, does not exclude them—and *Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12.* very absurdly understood and applied, by *Adult-Baptizers*, to Water-Baptism.

This *Defence of the Plea*, was occasioned by a Pamphlet, call'd, *The Plea for Infants impleaded, &c.* published at *Canterbury*, 1742, signed, DAN. DOBEL.

And is addressed

To *Adult-Baptizers* in general, more particularly to those of the County of *Kent*.

Sold by MR. FENNER, Bookseller in *Canterbury*, Price 4d.
and by J. BRACKSTONE, at the *Globe* in *Cornhill*, *London*,

Where may be had,

The Plea for Infants, price 1 s. and the *Appendix to the Plea*, Price 6 d.

DEFENCE

OF

INFANT-BAPTISM:

WHEREIN

The Infants Right upon the Parents
 Faith is illustrated by those MIRACLES
 which were performed—Their Claim to
 Baptism and their being
 God's Holy Commission to
 go forth and preach the Gospel
 —and that they are very ab-
 solutely and unquestionably, by Ab-
 solution, to be baptized.



This Defence of the True was occasioned by
 a Pamphlet, called The True Infant im-
 pious, &c. published at Cambridge 1743
 signed, DAN. DOUGLAS.

And is addressed

To All Ministers in general, more particularly
 to those of the County of Kent.

Sold by Mr. R. H. B. Bookeller in Cambridge, Price 3s.
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TO

ADULT-BAPTIZERS

IN GENERAL,

More particularly those of the County of
K E N T.

GOOD PEOPLE,

THE occasion of my thus addressing you, is a *Letter* I have received, signed DANIEL DOBEL of Cranbrook, together with a small pamphlet published at Canterbury, called, *The Plea for Infants impleaded, &c.*—as the *objections* therein raised, seem to be such, as common people strongly prejudiced against *Infant-baptism*, are, or may be inclined to make, should they persuade themselves to read the PLEA, &c. I have prevailed with myself, to lay before you the fallacy or inconclusiveness of such reasoning; and to advance some other arguments in defence of *Infant-baptism*. I hope the attempts made farther to support and clear the doctrine of *Infant-baptism*, will be a sufficient apology with my Friends, the *Infant-baptizers*, for my taking notice of Mr. *Dobel's* performance.—You, adult-baptizers will find, after
B other

other things offer'd in this defence, a *difficulty* thrown in your way with regard to your sense of *Rom. vi. 3, 4.* and *Col. ii. 12.* which two texts, applied as you generally do to water-baptism, I humbly imagine, are no longer *tenable* by you.—But should this attempt have no efficacy sufficient to convince you, if you are good-natur'd, you cannot but take it well, that I have been at this *trouble and charge* on your account.—I now take leave of the *debate*; having, in the opinion of many of my worthy Friends, sufficiently defended the *baptism of infants*.

I am

Yours, in all respects

becoming a *lover of truth*,

MY *searching neighbour* * pleaseth himself with thinking that he has done mighty feats by picking out some single passages, in order to discover, as he imagines, some contradictions.—He begins with p. 4. of the *Plea*, where, in arguing against *Barclay*, “Water-baptism is said to stand *joined* to
“repentance, as previously requisite to the
“remission of sins, and to the receiving of
“the holy Spirit”——and this he would have to stand in contradiction to p. 24. where it is asserted, “that nothing more was requisite
“to baptism, than a bare profession that a
“man believed Jesus to be the Messiah”——and upon this he calls the author of the *Plea*,

* This epithet alludes to his motto, taken from *Prov. xviii. 17.*

a *time serving* author——but can any man see that the *conclusion* he has drawn has any thing to do with the *premise*? what if water-baptism in the New Testament plan stands joined to repentance, as previously requisite to the *remission of sins*? It does not thence follow, that *moral temper* was the necessary pre-requisite to baptism.——*Facts* shew, that Men were baptized who were *immoral* and *no true* penitents. And therefore, since the *first Baptizers* did baptize upon a *bare profession* of men's believing in Christ, whether they were sincere or not, the present *Adult-Baptizers* have a Standard *above* the size of the apostolic Standard. *Besides*, tho' Baptism stands *joined with repentance*, as previously requisite to the remission of Sins, the Author of the Plea has never said, that *remission of Sins was not attainable without Baptism*.——He has shewn Baptism to be a *positive rite*, and as such, what has not the same sanction with *faith and repentance*——*he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned*. Not, he that believeth not, and is *not baptized* shall be damned.——The importance of any *positive rite* cannot affect the Salvation of Men, who are sincere, and do not discern its force or obligation; this is allowed in the *Plea*. So that, altho' *Baptism* is joined with faith or repentance in the Gospel plan, it is never said to be of *equal* worth or value with either faith or repentance.——

Had Mr. *Dobel* attended to the ingenious Mr. JAMES FOSTER's valuable defence of

Christianity he would have found, that upon the *Adult-Baptizers* principles, who lay so much stress upon a *positive rite*, Christianity would not be defensible against an unbeliever; for he says, "I readily grant the *author of Christianity*, &c. that the *instituted means* prescribed by Revelation, are not of such *fixed and immutable* obligation, but that agreeably to the law of nature, they are to be *practised or omitted*, as best suits that end for which they were ordained. To imagine the contrary, is to make things, dependent on circumstances, independent", &c*. —and again, "That positive institutions have been used *superstitiously*, and men have laid an *equal* Stress upon them as upon morality itself, can't be denied; nay, that they have resolved the whole of religion into *external* observances, and instead of making it consist in the necessary duties of *piety, justice, and charity*, placed it not only in the *instituted means appointed by God*, but in trifling ceremonies, &c. —and that their zeal for these things, animated by *blind* Superstition and Prejudice, and under the influence of *interested and designing* men, has transported them beyond all bounds †;" —and once more, "Every one that knows any thing of the doctrine of Scripture, must know, that positive duties are always represented as *inferior and subservient* to moral; and of no

* The usefulness, &c. of the Christian Revelation, p. 285.
 † Page 307.

“significancy or value, in comparison with
“justice, mercy, fidelity, and other branches
“of the *Law of Nature*, which are of su-
“preme, eternal, and indispensable obligation*.”

Thus evident and clear is his reasoning, and plainly shews how Baptism may stand *joined* with repentance, as an *instituted means*, and yet not be *essential* to remission of sins, as repentance is allowed to be—Nor does any contradiction or confusion appear in the *Plea*, from the argument against *Barclay*, and that against the *Adult-Baptizers*.—

Another remark is on Baptism being said to have a moral Sense belonging to it, that imported an open, voluntary devotedness and resignation to Sufferings and Death, p. 5. of the Plea.

And no doubt, this Sense might be applied to it among the *first Christians*, so imminently expos'd to persecution on account of their professing Christianity——But does it therefore follow, that their *infants* could not be baptized, because they could not express this *moral Sense*. Their infants would be exposed along with their Parents, and therefore were properly dedicated or devoted to God in Christ by baptism.——But if they must not be baptized, because not capable of expressing this voluntary devotedness to death and sufferings, it may prove *too much*, viz. that in a peaceful State of the Church, where there is no man-

ner of prospect of persecution for the cause of Christ, that grown Persons must not be baptized, because they cannot express *such devotedness* by their baptism.——

This positive Impleader, would have us to know, that Christians have no Authority at all to baptize, but by virtue of the commission of our Lord, nor have they warrant to baptize any but such as he commanded; so that the subjects of baptism must be first taught, before they are baptized.

This is at once to cut off the Example of our Lord's Baptism, and his therein fulfilling all righteousness; and of consequence, sets aside the argument contained in Mr. Burroughs's first Discourse on positive Institutions——moreover it renders the baptism of John of no force in the doctrine of Baptism; contrary to this Impleader's own authority, who has said, "he agrees with the Author of the Plea about the pre-requisites in adult persons to Christian Baptism, from his citations of several texts; as it is, what is according to the Tenor of the New Testament doctrine; as is also MORE FULLY expressed by JOHN, who required of such as came to be baptized of him, that they should bring forth——fruits meet for Repentance, Matth. iii. 8." And yet this same Man does positively assert, that Christians have no authority at all to baptize, but by virtue of the commission of our Lord——tho' the pre-requisites to Baptism are

more

more fully expressed by *John*, than by our Lord, *Matth.* iv. 17. *Mark* i. 14, 15. or by his apostle *Peter*, *Acts* ii. 30.—This express contradiction may be found in his 6th and 9th pages compared.—

N. B. Mr. *Burroughs* would do well to shew, that our Lord's submitting to baptism, and thereby fulfilling all righteousness, stands related to any other righteousness than that of the Law and the Prophets, respecting water-baptism; which if he cannot do, then the practice of water-baptism, stands evidently supported on the Law and the Prophets; and if so, then the arguments drawn from *Rabbinical* writers, to prove the antient practice of Baptism among the *Jews*, has a strong foundation of Support, in that declaration of our Lord's, viz. thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness.

Mr. *Dobel* farther says, *Children must be FIRST taught before they are baptized.*

But he might have seen in the *Appendix* to the Plea, p. 24. That DISCIPLING was not of persons already taught, but to the end that they should be taught; and the learned *Lightfoot* has observed, that to put such a Sense upon the words, as the *Impleader* does, is such one as the Apostles and all the Jewish Nation had never known or heard of before.—Indeed the Plea, with its *Appendix*, which Mr. *Dobel* owns he has seen, had enough in it to shew, that the *Baptismal* rite was an antient usage, by which they initiated proselytes.—

But

But this, no more than any other of the *grand difficulties* in his way, must be noticed by him.

On the contrary, to make short work of it, the commission of Jesus is the only authority, and Christians must not ask why he gave this commission? since it was his absolute pleasure, and founded on nothing else.—

But let me tell Mr. D. this is not to be supported. Our Lord has instituted another rite, which he manifestly took from a *Jewish Custom*, of eating bread and drinking wine, at the Paschal Supper *, with solemn thanksgivings to God, as the giver of their corn and wine; and the custom had something very pertinent and natural in it. It seem'd to belong to the religion of nature. It was therefore expressive of great wisdom and goodness in *Jesus*, to adopt that custom, and apply it to the remembrance of his body broken, and his blood shed for the life of the world—— and will any suppose it more improper that *Jesus* should adopt a *rite*, that had been in use for about 1600 years, by which not only native *Jews* were *purified* from their uncleannesses, but the impure *Gentiles* were *washed*; and so initiated into the church of God.—— This appears to have been the case, nor is it at all probable, that the compassionate *Jesus* would have imposed a rite *arbitrarily* upon them; or have abrogated their *antient custom* of receiving infants into God's church; and

* See Dr. Hammond on 1 Cor. x. 16. Note (e).

have refused them admission, without assigning any one reason, or without leaving them something in *lieu* of the ancient privileges they had enjoyed.—Nay, I add, this Impleader might have seen [from that passage he himself quotes, *Matth. iii. 8. viz. John's bidding them, who came to be baptized of him, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance;*] that these fruits were not *precedent* to, but were *subsequent* of their baptism, compare ver. 11. with *Luke iii. 7, 11—15*. They were wicked persons when he baptized them, and he accordingly calls them a *generation of vipers*. Men that thought it sufficient that they could say, that *they had Abraham to their father*,—but these he baptized *unto or into* the doctrine of repentance; and bids them *bring forth such fruits as would shew them to be penitents*,—what sort of teaching is here before baptizing?—

Indeed the Impleader thinks, he has much advantage from the Scriptures Silence about the Baptism of Infants, and he greatly glories upon it! so that the Baptizers of Infants must be the innovators, and not they who go without any rule in educating their children till of mature age [in the Christian Religion] before they baptize them.—

But why so sanguine? was the silence *equal* on both sides, then neither could have room to triumph; but there are *Families*, whole *Households* mentioned, that were baptized in
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virtue of the *Head or Parent's* professing of his faith in the Christian Religion.—To this it is said, *households have not always children or infants in them.*—True: but it does not therefore follow, *that they never have.* Nay, the odds is so great on the side of their having children, that it is *three to one*, but they have young children or infants: and if *three* families are baptized, under the name of Households, the odds is *thirty to one*, but that there were children or a child in one or the other of them, unless it could be proved, that there was a greater likelihood of Households embracing the Gospel, who had no children, than those who had.—Or that the *first preachers* of the Gospel pick'd out Families that had no Children, as most proper to be converted by them.—but should we grant, contrary to all reason and probability, that there was *not one* young child in all the households said to be baptized; it is, and has been demanded, that it be shewn, what greater propriety there would be in the apostle's baptizing a man's *Slave or Servant*, because he (the Master) profess'd to believe in Jesus, than there would have been in his baptizing an infant, in virtue of that his faith? There might be *infidelity* and *obstinacy* in the man's slave; but no such opposition would be found in the tender mind of his infant-offspring.—

Nevertheless my Impleader will have it, that we might as well think that the greetings and
saluta-

salutations sent to the households of Aristobulus, Narcissus, and Onesiphorus, were sent to infants as well as to the adult.—

And whatever may be the custom about Cranbrook, there is nothing more common in most parts of England, than to send greetings and salutations to the infants and young children in families, tho' they are not able to return the compliment.

But then our Lord's praying for them, p. 55. of the Plea, must not conclude that they are proper subjects of baptism, because the proper subjects of prayer.—

Why so?—why, if this was the case, it would follow, that infidels and unbelievers as such, with their infants are proper subjects of baptism.—

Another rash Conclusion.—Does it follow that because children, when brought by their parents to Christ to be blessed by him, became the proper subjects of his blessing; that therefore, those children that were not brought to him, but whose parents despised his blessing, were therefore alike proper subjects of his blessing? It was the parents act that made the propriety or fitness. And if an Heathen should come and propose himself as a member of the Christian Church, he and his child would have a right to baptism, as the initiating rite to the privileges of the Christian Covenant.—So that the argument in the

Plea will yet stand good, *viz.* That if Men's bringing their infants to Christ, rendered them the proper subjects of his blessing, or praying for them, it will lie upon *adult-baptizers* to prove, that children are not as capable of receiving the initiating-baptismal-rite, which can impart nothing, as they were of being *blessed* or *prayed* for by our Lord.—Nay, they should shew, that if our Lord intended to *exclude* Infants an admision into his Church; that *this way* of encouraging children to be brought to him by their parents, was not an *inconsistent* practice; or at least, that it does not demand a fuller explication.—I *add*, the compassionate Jesus did not only encourage *Jewish parents* to look upon their children, as a *part* of his charge along with themselves, and as being HOLY upon their embracing the Christian doctrine: but he even taught the same doctrine by the *voice of miracle*, *viz.* that children stood entitled to the benefits and blessings of his Mediation upon the FAITH of their parents. So the ruler *Jairus*, had his little daughter raised from death, or a sickness nigh to death, on account of his *faith*, *Mar. v. 36.* so the daughter of the *Syrophœnician woman*, was healed or cured of an unclean Spirit, on the *Faith* of her mother, *Mar. vii. 29.* So the father of the child that is said to have a dumb and deaf Spirit, that gave him great agonies, was healed upon his Father's *believing*, *Mar. ix. 23, 24.*—and several other instances of the like nature might be produced.—Now, it is evident, that our Lord did not require *faith* in the child,

child, but in the parents, who expressed a concern for them; and in virtue of that faith, the *dead* are raised, and the *diseased* cured! and yet, forsooth, would we but implicitly be led by Mr. D—, we must not initiate our children upon our own *faith* or *profession* of the Christian religion, tho' the author of our religion has shewn the suitableness and acceptableness of it, both by doctrine and miracle: or, by his more *common* and more *extraordinary* behaviour towards them.—

Let none say, that this does not reach the case of *Baptism*: for, the *condition* is the same, viz. *believing in Christ*.—The *benefit* was a part of the great design of Christ's mediation; according to that famous prophecy, *Isa. liii. 4.* which St. *Matthew* has applied to the case before us, ch. viii. v. 17. *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*—he did it, by removing the disorders of young children, upon the faith of their parents. Which undeniably proves, that the *faith* of parents is esteem'd by the *wisdom of God*, a proper recommendation of their offspring to his care and compassionate notice; and must greatly *confirm* and *strengthen* the exercise of it, whilst they are devoting their children to God in Christ by Baptism: since infants are manifestly concerned in that part of Christ's mediation, which respects the remission of sins, *i. e.* a deliverance from death, in that *all that die in Adam, shall be made alive in Christ*; so that if Infants die in *Adam*, they are concerned in this farther part of Christ's mediation.—

Besides, Children were constantly acknowledged by Jews, in their religious Services, to be the HERITAGE of *Jehovah*, his Lot, his Possession, see *Pf.* cxxxvii. 3.—the word there render'd *heritage* (*Na-hba-lat*) is translated *inheritance*, *Pf.* ii. 8.—The word and idiom is *Hebraic*, see *Pf.* xciv. 5. *Jer.* xii. 7, 8, 9, *Joel.* ii. 17. iii. 2. *Mic.* vii. 14.—The Jews therefore could never have *silently* given up their childrens claim to the initiating ceremonial, or dedicatory rite.

Moreover, we find that Questions arose between *John's* Disciples and the Jews about purifying, probably about the efficacy of their Master's baptism, * *John* iii. 25. we might therefore have expected that an affair of so much importance, as that of *cutting off* the Jews infant Children, would have made the greatest noise; and that numbers of very plausible objections would have been brought against it—so that the *perfect* silence, considering the temper of the Jews, and their strong prejudices, almost amounts to a *certain* evidence, that their childrens baptism was never once called in question.

Hence it appears, that the adult-baptizers being so very confident in their boastings from the express letter of the commission given by our Lord, has no such weight in it, as they would have us imagine.

* See Dr. S. Clarke's Paraph. on that Place, and Note.

What? because he said, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them*; therefore, teaching must precede baptizing!—They themselves must own, that *John's teaching*, and the apostles *teaching*, would have been of very little avail, if the persons whom they baptized, had had no farther knowledge of Christianity, than they had before baptism—for tho' they observed their commission, and went about teaching and baptizing, yet I am persuaded from the New Testament account, *few* were esteemed Christians of any size when they baptized them; many could not, *i. e.* those households which were baptized in virtue of the faith of their heads.—And to say that *all* must be taught before they are baptized, from the express requirement of this commission, is an unwarrantable conclusion. The *Jews* had never been used to teach their children, after their being initiated into their church—The manifest reason for placing the words in this order, is, the *preference* to be given to *teaching*, as to the nature of the mean. Nor can there be a clearer account given of it: the scriptures every where support this sense, particularly St. Paul's declaring, that *Christ sent him not to baptize*, *i. e.* not so much; preaching or teaching was the much more important Business.—

Should we therefore proceed with so much zeal and attachment to *the order of the words*, we might find it very difficult to give a reason why we do not shew as great a *literal* and *scrupulous* reverence to other words of our Lord,

Lord; nay, to an expresse institution of his, viz. *that of washing one another's feet*, John xiii. 14, 15. *If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your Feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers Feet, for I have set you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*—Can any thing be more expresse? Is not this as much a command and institution, as that of the other baptism?—This seems to be the only adult-baptism of the New Testament, or, the baptism not for infants, because infants cannot comply with this demand—but surely, it does not follow, that because grown persons are only fit to wash one another's feet, or baptize one another; that therefore it is not fit any should wash or baptize Infants, and so own them as God's heritage; or as holy.—By the way, *to fulfil all righteousness*, in the sense of Mr. Burroughs, would equally demand our regard to this example.—To proceed, there are many passages of scripture, where things are spoken of which have a relation to one another, that are not mentioned, nor were designed to be in rigid or strict order. Such as 2 Thess. ii. 13. *God hath chosen you from the beginning to salvation, thro' sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.*—What? does it follow from the order of the words, that *sanctification* of the spirit *precedeth* a belief of the truth?—If by *sanctification* is understood a personal holiness of heart and life, it could not go before a belief of the truth, in the sense of St. Paul.—but if it should mean only

a criterion of *separation* from the Gentiles by the *impartments* of the Spirit—to suppose this to be *previous* to a belief of the truth, would weaken the argument of adult-baptizers, as it would shew, that something of as much importance as baptism could precede a belief of the truth.—I have no room to add more instances; this may be sufficient as a *specimen*.—

And as to the FACTS, it is no less evident, that tho' the Apostles and sacred Historians have not particularly mentioned the baptism of *young children*, no man can fairly conclude from thence, that *young children*, or the infants of professing Christians are not to be baptized—It cannot be fairly concluded from the commission. And if not from thence, this author has already cut off all the authority of *facts*; for he says, “That Christians have no authority to baptize at all, but by virtue of the commission of our Lord, neither have they warrant to baptize any, but such as he commanded”—if therefore the Apostles, from any prejudice, should have *narrowed* the extent of the commission [as they certainly were for some time under great mistakes and strong prejudices about it, *i. e.* about preaching the Gospel to *all Nations*, as may be seen in the case of St. Peter, *Acts* x. who had a vision to inform and convince him] had they, I say, *narrowed* the commission, as to the Subjects of it, by not baptizing children, we might have expected they would have been set right—or, had they been forbid to baptize children

in that original commission, it would have been requisite that a *prejudice*, the most strong that can be conceived in the favour of infants, should have been removed by a vision or revelation—but as children, (the *ancient covenanters*, *i. e.* who always had been parties with their parents,) have never their right once called in question, we may safely conclude that they baptized them.

I am to observe, it is said in p. 24. of the Plea, that Paul could not speak to the factious Corinthians, but as unto carnal at best; to such as knew no more of christianity, than a baptized infant—

Here Mr. *Dobel*, or his *Printer*, has been guilty of very wrong pointing—the *Plea* has it, *but as unto carnal; at best, to such, &c.* but this I pass over.

He is very angry with this assertion, and is in great pain lest the *Author of the Plea* should farther expose himself—for in p. 33. he has said, that “Infants, which are baptized by us, we own to be incapable of any thought or understanding about what is applied to them.”—True, Mr. *D*—so he has, and has added, that none should venture to ridicule the practice on this account, since our Lord applied a *baptismal rite*, to persons as ignorant of the moral intention as an infant—but this Mr. *D.* did not like; he would much rather find a contradiction, *viz.* *that the factious Corinthians were as ignorant*

rant of Christianity as a baptized infant, and yet they had made an explicate declaration of their faith, which an infant cannot do, who is ignorant of what is done to him when baptized.

—I am satisfied no man, that has ever been well acquainted with any author, *sacred or prophane*, but what will allow the justness of the expression. Stronger, bolder figures, if it be one, are frequently used by writers of all degrees of learning or capacity. Nay, I know not whether it may not be justified, in the severest view that it can be took in. This bold assertion must be as *true* as it is *bold*; unless being *factious*, and *carnal*, and *boasters of their heads*, did discover any acquaintance they had with Christianity. — To be *carnal*, I hope is not to be christian; to be *factious*, I hope is not to be christian; and to be *babes in understanding the christian doctrine*, in the express idea of *St. Paul*, will surely vindicate the assertion, *viz. that they knew no more of Christianity than a baptized infant.* —

These things scarce deserve a serious consideration. —

Once more, *the author of the Plea is charged with dismembering a text, and being therein akin to a Papist* — it is *Acts ii. 38, 39. which is thus inserted*, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus; — for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to them that are afar off.

This writer plainly is ignorant of the manner of writing, since had he seen that the *black lines* are inserted, after, *sins*—and after, *afar off*—he would have been more ingenious than to have surmised that it was done with a design to impose upon the reader.

Nevertheless to humour him, I will insert the whole text, and see how the paraphrase will run. — Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is unto you, and to your CHILDREN, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Which I thus paraphrase, “Repent, ye that are capable of repenting, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is not only to you, but to your children; i. e. the Christian covenant has not only privileges to be immediately conferred on you, but your children may be initiated as parties, as you know they have ever been acknowledged as members with you of the church under Judaism. Nor is it only made to you, and intended to include your immediate off-spring, but it is intended to take in all that are *afar off*, even as many as the Lord God shall call.”

But it seems infants cannot be called, because they are incapable of obeying any call!

Many

Many are the devices of mens imagination to break the force of any truth that lies against them. Nothing is plainer than that the promise belonged to them and to their children in the present tense; (451) the promise IS to you and to your children; not is to you, and shall be to your children—not to your after-children exclusive of the present. Besides, it is the most likely sense, to apply it to their children immediately: since those who received not the Gospel-offer, during the season of the apostles making it, hardened greatly with their children in their iniquities, and the succeeding age became so enormously wicked, that Josephus himself owns, that the inhabitants of Judea were ripe for judgment, in that all manner of iniquity abounded among them. Besides, the adverb μακρῶν, render'd *afar off*, is used for *time*, by the best Greek writers. Nay, it seems to be so used, *Matt. xxiii. 14.* And for a pretence make *long Prayer*, *Mark xii. 40. Luke xx. 47.*—But should this be contested, and it be referr'd to *place*, it will be equally as pertinent.—Nor could the *Jews* be supposed to understand him of their remote or distant children, and not of those present with them—or of the *Gentiles* being receiv'd, and their own children rejected.—As to the *call*; they and theirs were called together, as *Abraham* and his children were included together in the promise, and under the same seal of the covenant; and as the profelytes had all along been initiated along with their children.—Besides, a *call*, in the language of the New Testament,

Testament, is the gospel's being promulged to any nation or people: so that men and their children are together under the *same call*. To this purpose we find God's *call of Israel out of Egypt*; mention'd, *Hos. xi. 1.* which was surely of parents and children *together*.—And they are equally called *God's servants*; with their Parents, even the infant-offspring of Jewish slaves, are called expressly *God's servants*; and are set at liberty along with their parents; see *Lev. xxv. 41, 42.*

But because they cannot answer, therefore they cannot be called!—This is a strange reason! for many are called, who are morally as incapable of answering, as infants—God has called, when there was none to answer; they *would not*, morally *could not* answer. But *infants* may be called to privileges, whether they can answer or no.—We read of *beasts* being covenanted for; and surely they are as *fit* subjects of a covenant as the *beasts of the field*; and yet, these were set down as express parties in the *Noachic covenant*; see *Gen. ix. 12, 13.* And God said, *This is the token of the Covenant, which I make between me, and you, and EVERY LIVING THING that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.*—But because it is said, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them*—therefore, *right or wrong*, children, infants must not be baptized. Tho' the word rendered *teach*, only intends to *disciple*, or *preach* the gospel to persons untaught, and at the same time

time baptize them, to the end they may be treated by you, as disciples. Which was the case; for the apostles baptized the people as soon as ever they professed to believe the gospel, and their households with them.—This was the custom of the apostles, this had been the practice of John the Baptist, viz. to baptize upon men's flocking in to him, tho' he knew them to be a generation of vipers; and then to exhort them, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.—

Upon the whole, as baptism can be made no other than a *positive* rite, to look upon it as more or less, is to treat it *falsely*, and to abuse the intention of it. It must therefore be *figuratively* understood, when it stands to express moral temper; as when the apostle mentions a being buried with Christ in baptism, Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12. Since the plunging of a person in water has no manner of resemblance of a burial, no more than Christ's baptism had any thing of the nature of one. So it can only intend the profession of Christianity exposing men to death, and the obligations they lay under to walk in newness of life. When therefore we urge a *moral importance* of water-baptism from this figurative use of the word, we treat it *falsely*, and place more to it than it can be expressive of. And on the other hand, when we deny it to be a *positive* rite, and treat it with contempt, tho' our Lord himself submitted to it, in order to fulfil all righteousness; i. e. to express his approbation of it, as having been required by the law and the prophets, as an

an external emblem of purity, and a right of dedication, of men, who embraced the true religion, together with their off-spring; we then seem chargeable with a false treatment of it, especially since Christ has adopted the rite, and recommended the application of it to his disciples.

To conclude; I would desire the *plunging baptizers*, who will deny baptism to any but the *adult*, to abate their zeal and assurance from the order of the words, *Go teach, &c.* For if baptism must be understood, as they say it must, to express a *burial* and a *resurrection*, or a resemblance of Christ's burial and resurrection, no consistent *Antipedobaptist* can deny, but that it manifestly teacheth us from the order of nature, [which surely will conclude as strongly as the order of words] that baptism should follow, and not precede the supper: because, the supper is plainly instituted as a *memorial* of his death; and in the *Antipedobaptists* sense, the institution of Baptism is to represent his *burial* and *resurrection*. So that in their practice, they scrupulously observe the order of the words, according to the form in which the commission runs, *viz. Go teach, baptizing* — but without any manner of hesitation, they invert the order of nature, by obliging their members to undergo a resemblance of a *burial* and *resurrection*, before they shall be admitted to solemnize the memorials of a *death*, which was and could not but be, *previous* to that burial and resurrection.

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A P P E N D I X *to the Plea for Infants.*

A G A I N S T

The Rev. Mr. JOSEPH BURROUGHS's *Defence*
of his Two Discourses, relating to positive In-
stitutions.

By C A L E B F L E M I N G,
Author of the APPENDIX, &c.

For supporting one's own Sentiments, or for examining those of
others, a Man needs no Apology.—But for personal ill Treat-
ment, there can be no sufficient Excuse.

See an *Epistle* to WARBURTON.

Whoever engages in the Defence of a Party with the usual Vio-
lence, you may be satisfied, and may take it for a general Rule,
has not his Zeal from Religion, but something which lies at
Bottom, of a quite contrary Nature.

GALE.

ZEAL for Truth arises from abundant Charity to the Souls of
Men: So that CHARITY and ZEAL are nearly ally'd, if
they are genuine.

GROSVENOR.

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DECEMBER

OF

UNIVERSITY-BAPTISM

OR A

VINDICATION

OF THE

APPENDIX to the Plea for Infants

AGAINST

THE NEW METHOD OF BAPTISM

BY THE REV. MR. J. H. W. BAPTIST

BY J. H. W. BAPTIST

NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY

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PREFACE to the Reader.

IN the following Vindication, you will find, that I have endeavour'd to bring the matters under distinct heads of argument, which I have divided into sections. My reason was this, viz. to make the argument more easily understood, by freeing the memory from those blendings of ideas, which must have been the case, if I had pursued Mr. Burroughs's defence in that order in which it is wrote. — To the Reader there will indeed be somewhat more trouble in turning over to Mr. Burroughs's pages: But this, I hope, will be recompensed by the method taken.

The introduction is chiefly taken up in defending myself from the imputations of the writer; and in supporting the charge of bigotry laid against the party.

Sect. I. Respects positive institutions, their nature, design, periods; — shews, that Mr. Burroughs has carried their importance too high; by making mere will and pleasure a sufficient ground of obedience; and by denying that the gracious and useful purposes proposed in them, alters any thing in the nature of obligation. — The capacity and integrity of infant-baptizers virtually called in question by him. — The analogy between baptism

tism and circumcision. — The consent of the subject considered; or the profession of his own faith. — The righteousness fulfilled therein the same in infant-baptism, as in that of adult-baptism.

Sect. II. Upon our Lord's going from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John. Mr. Burroughs's sense of it only imaginary.

Sect. III. Upon proselyte-baptism, which shews, that proselytes must have had the water of separation applied to them, by virtue of the Mosaic constitution; tho' neither Josephus, Philo, nor any Talmudical writer had took notice of it, and it greatly assists us in accounting for John's coming to prepare men for the Messiah's kingdom by the baptism of repentance. Water-baptism not an institution of Jesus, or had not its origin in his appointment, but was a Jewish rite adopted by him.

Sect. IV. Infants the subjects of water-baptism. — It does not appear to be the mind of Christ, that none but adult persons should be baptized. — Our Lord's baptism in favour of infants. — If infants are equally the care of heaven now, as under former dispensations, this is a reason of their baptism. — Our Lord has given no such account of the ordinance of baptism as forbids them. — Nor is Dr. Gale's argument from the teaching, conclusive; for infants belong to the all nations that are to be baptized. — Circumcision was as much a seal to Abraham's seed as to himself. — No vast difference between its being a seal and a token. — Circumcision properly succeeded by baptism, tho' females had not the seal of circumcision in their flesh; they were equally included in the covenant

nant with the males.—If injury has been done to Philip in the debate between us, Mr. Burroughs has done it.

Sect. V. Upon the mode of baptism. The word βαπτίζω, 1 Cor. x. 2. cannot signify to plunge, or have an allusive correspondence with plunging, by an overwhelming or encompassing. — The allusive sense, when applied to the baptism of infants, much more easy and rational. — Mr. Burroughs's emphatical sense of εἰς, Mark i. 9. considered, and shewn not to be emphatical. The terms, coming up from, or out of the water, does no way explain the mode of baptism. — No more stress to be laid upon εἰς than upon ἀπο. — The distinction between baptizo and baptizo.

In these sections, I have taken in those arguments, upon which Mr. Burroughs professes to lay the greatest stress; and, as far as I am capable of knowing myself, with a sincere and fervent regard for truth, and for the honour of Jesus.

I designed to have troubled the world no more with my thoughts on the subject of infant-baptism: but Mr. Burroughs's heavy charge of injurious, insolent treatment both of him, and of the whole body of Anabaptists, has made it needful I should take some notice of his defence. If Mr. Burroughs should give this vindication an unprejudic'd reading, I am in hopes he will not so severely censure me as he has done.

If the contrary should happen, and he thinks I have injur'd him, he is at liberty, to say whatever else he can of me, or of my writings, only let him have a regard to truth, and he is welcome. I will

will promise him this, that whatever he shall discover in me, unworthy the Christian, I will not call it invective (b) ; but will secretly honour him for it ; tho' I dare not openly pay him such respect, for fear of provoking him again to charge me with hypocrisy (c). — If he is upon good grounds persuaded, that I am doing any disservice to the cause of true religion, or that I am injuring the interests of pure and genuine christianity, in my life or doctrine, the more he exposes me to contempt, the more he lessens my influence, and the better. — If I know myself, I would rather wear out the remainder of life, even bereaved of that friendship I now share from men, than be found making use of such provision to the dishonour of God, or to the propagation of falshood. — But if Mr. Burroughs has nothing more to say, nothing better to say, than what is contained in his defence ; I hope he will excuse me from any farther notice of the controversy.

The Reader will not take offence, at my repeating the same reasoning in several parts of this Vindication ; since, he will find the same sort of argument with some variation, as to the light in which it is put, as frequently used by Mr. Burroughs, which has made such repetitions unavoidable.

I am, with all humility, and to the utmost of my ability, at the service of men,

C. F.

(b) Def. p. 7. l. 9.

(c) See the ground of this, Def. p. 9. begin.

THE INTRODUCTION.

AS Mr. BURROUGHS, in his defence of his two discourses, &c. has been pleased to treat my *personal character*, as well as that of my *writings*, with great freedom, I would here offer a few things in defence of my character, which is impeach'd by him.

Mr. Burroughs says, (a) " that I seem to expect *some advantage* to myself by *concealing* my name, in all the *ungenerous treatment* I give to others."

What he means by this insinuation, I do not well understand. — If he would intimate, that there is something in my *character*, which, if known, would prejudice the reputation of my writings; or discover any *deceit*, *hypocrisy*, or *mercenaryness* in my *aims* or *intentions*, it is, (thanks be to God) out of his power, or any man's else to make such discovery.

If he would insinuate, that I have any reason of *fear* or of *shame*, or have any servile dependence, either upon him, or upon any other *adult baptizer*, or *adult baptized*, he does me wrong, for I have none: And in my inquiries

(a) Def. P. 4.

after

after *truth*, I fear no man, nor stand in awe of the displeasure of any.

If he would insinuate, that I expected to be treated with more *caution* and *respect* by the *concealment* of my name; I can assure him, that I did only *expect* and *desire* to have the arguments I have advanced (in defence of infant-baptism) treated agreeably to their strength and degree of importance. Nor am I so much *unacquainted* with the world as to suppose, that men would conclude there was any thing either *better* or *worse* in my writings, on account of their being *anonymous*. — *Anonymous writings* are very common. — But whatever were my expectations, Mr. B. has sufficiently convinc'd me, that it was in vain for me to expect to be treated *more courteously* for being *anonymous*; since he could not surely have treated the vilest character with more *dedignation* or *contempt*. — However, to remove from him *all offence*, from such *concealment*, I have to this *Vindication* prefixed my name.

Again, he chargeth me with *disimulation* or *hypocrisy*, p. 9. — with an *impatience of contradiction*, and an *inclination to strife and contention*, p. 7. — And throughout his defence, he imputes to me a *proud, uncharitable spirit*, fill'd with the most *sovereign contempt* of the whole body of *adult-baptizers*.

This is a very *injurious* representation of me; for I am conscious never to have intended to throw the *least contempt* on the *body* of them; no, nor upon any *one individual* of that body,

on

on account of his *differing* sentiments. — Notwithstanding this, Mr. B. will have it, that I have “ *taken occasion to fall foul on his character,* “ *and endeavoured to bring all his brethren into* “ *contempt (b).*”

In denial of the truth of this *accusation*, I refer the *public* to their own examination of the *appendix* to Mr. B's *defence*, and this *vindication*; not doubting, but that the *impartial* will conclude, that Mr. B. has verified an old proverb, *viz. That it is much more safe for some men to steal sheep, than for others to look over the fence.*

He has indeed shewn me the *way of falling foul on character*; — but, I hope, I shall keep clear of an *imitation*; if there be any distinction to be made between *just satire*, and *scurrility* or *defamation*.

And yet, I acknowledge, I have express'd *contempt* towards the BIGOTRY of the *party*; and I think I have a right so to do; as when I say, “ That tho' it must be own'd, that *truth* “ does not always side with numbers, or take “ up her dwelling with the majority; yet it “ seems somewhat wonderful, that she should “ only have so *small an handful of advocates* “ among the many parties and sects that make “ up the christian world. Nor only so, but it is “ amazing that this *particular feature* of hers “ should differ so widely in its effects upon its “ admirers, even as to produce an *unballed*, 2n “ *uncharitable* zeal in every individual, in proportion to the attachment he has for it (c).”

(b) Def. p. 4.

(c) Append. p. 2.

Do I direct a *sovereign contempt*, in this passage, at the *number*, or at the *bigotry* of the party?—I am content to refer myself to any unprejudic'd reader, of common understanding.

But the *party* is chargeable with *bigotry*, in the point of baptism; inasmuch as they look upon their *mode* of it, applied only to *adult-subjects*, as necessary to determine any to be of the *visible church of Christ*, which is the manifest design of Mr. B's *two discourses*, and of his defence; in which he expressly says, that such an application of baptism, is "that very way which Christ has thought fit to appoint, in which men ought to make profession of the christian religion (d)." — So that all other baptism is *invalid*; and none are properly christians, but the *adult-baptized*. — This I take to be manifest *bigotry*; and as such, the proper subject of *contempt* and *ridicule*.

Mr. B. I am persuaded, would himself express a like *sovereign contempt* upon a *papist's* claiming the character of a *true catholic*! — or upon his defending the literal sense of, *this is my body*, in order to prove *transubstantiation*: — or, upon a STEBBING's declaring, *that a man might be treated as an HERETICK by the church, who was nothing like it in the eye of God*. — Or, upon *articles of faith* being made the terms of christian communion, concerning which, men cannot possibly have any *clear, distinct, or determinate* ideas. I dare say Mr. B. would think these things proper subjects of *ridicule* and *con-*

(d) Def. p. 60. and *two discourses* throughout.

tempt. — And why then should not the *bigotry* of the *anabaptists* be treated in like manner? they actually lay so great a stress upon *their way* of baptizing, as to deny *church-fellowship*, or a *communion* with them at the *Lord's table*, to all such who are not *thus* baptized. This is true of the *body* of them. Nay, they can admit a *paedobaptist minister* to preach to them, and offer up their prayers and praises to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, even in the service *immediately preceding* their celebration of the supper, and yet he must not partake with them of that *thanksgiving rite*. — If this be not *bigotry*, I know of none in the world. Here is “ a disproportionate concern to the weight of the matter, and to the prejudice of a more important truth.” Forasmuch as *baptism*, in their particular way, is made *more necessary* to church communion, than to the final happiness of men. For such *paedobaptists* can be allowed by them to be *heirs* of God, and *joint heirs* with Christ, but yet, not *fit* to partake with them of that ONE BREAD, of which all Christ's disciples are commanded to partake.

I persist therefore in saying, that the advocates for truth, are *but a very small handful*, and the visible church of Christ is almost invisible, *i. e.* if none but adult-plunging-baptizers, are *truth's* sincere advocates; and if their practice is of so much importance, as Mr. B. contends for, in his *two discourses* and *defence*. For men, according to him, are not the *visible members* of Christ's church, who have not made an *open profession* of

their *own* faith and repentance, by adult-plunging-baptism. This is the drift of his *whole reasoning*, or, to me, he is unintelligible.

Every *impartial* reader of my *defence* of infant-baptism will plainly see, that that *sovereign contempt* which, Mr. B. says I shew to the *anabaptists*, has the *bigotry* of the party, and not their persons (on account of baptizing) as the *subject* of it. — For I have no where call'd in question the *integrity* of the adult-baptizer, — I have no where made their practice a *disqualification* for church communion, — neither have I laid such a stress upon *any mode* of baptism, as to *contract* the compass of Christ's visible church; nor so as to exclude men from any of the privileges and benefits of the gospel salvation. But,

The charge I have brought against the *anabaptists* (e) has too much occasion given for it, even with regard to that *unseemly degree of warmth* expressed by them, when debating the point of baptism. I have been an *eye and ear witness*, among many others, of something like a *feverish heat* in the spirit of a very publick performance, tho' delivered by a *gentleman* of a very publick character. — And I have been informed by very worthy men, from their own personal knowledge, that some of the most shining characters that have lately been among the *anabaptists* for *learning*, and for *temper and moderation*, in all other respects, and who would have been ornaments to any denomination

(e) *N. B.* I use not the term by way of reproach; but because, in my opinion, they practise *re-baptizing*.

of christians, have not been able to preserve their moderation, when debating on the subject of baptism.

Even their great advocate Dr. GALE, has not been free from this censorious, uncharitable temper; as appears by his reflections on Mr. Wall's history, &c. For in p. 187, he says, "That John baptized by dipping, is as plain, as a thing can well be; and were it not for the DARING TEMPERs of some men, it would be trifling, in such an excess of light, to attempt to prove it." Can any thing be more insulting? Is not this, to charge men with impudence? Whence had he this excess of light, that shews mens tempers to be daring, who attempt to prove that John did not baptize by dipping? There is nothing in the text, nothing in the history of the sacramental use of water among the Jews, to prove he did; their priests always used the water of separation by sprinkling (f). There is therefore no such mighty stretch, to give John's baptizing another turn to that of dipping; as he asserts there must. (g)

Nor is that writer only guilty of a singly inadvertent charge of mens wanting integrity of mind, who differ from him in the affair of baptism; but having said, without any sufficient warrant, that μαθηται rendered disciples, Acts xv. 10. "intends only the converts, exclusively of their infants, if they had any." He then says, "This, you see, Sir, is so very clear, that nothing but PREPOSSESSION could incline

(f) See the Challenge.

(g) Reflections, p. 187.

" any

“ any man to assert, it was infants especially
 “ on whom this yoke was attempted to be
 “ put. (b)”

What excess of light he had here, I cannot see. The *prepossession* which he mentions, seems to have had sufficient ground in fact to support it; since that yoke refer'd to, viz. that of *circumcision*, had been ever applied to *infants*, and but rarely to any else but infants, during the *Jewish* state: But with what face the *JUDAIZERS* would have put this yoke upon the *disciples*, without intending to put it upon the infants of those *new converts*, I cannot possibly discern. Therefore *infants* must solely be intended to be included under the name *disciple*, in this place: And the *prepossession* is unavoidable. So that to talk of the etymology of the word, as he does, is of little avail in this place, when it was highly improbable that *infants* should be here excluded the idea annexed to the term *disciples*, but must be intended according to the ancient custom or usage.

But Dr. Gale is yet more free with the *moral characters* of those who differ from him; “ for,
 “ says he, ask a *countryman* what he means by
 “ the word *scholar*, he will tell you, he means
 “ one that goes to school to learn. — And
 “ what by *disciple*? — One that holds such a
 “ man's opinions, and thinks his way best. And
 “ you will find the *country-man* understands
 “ his mother-tongue *better* than some others
 “ seem to do; and if he uses *more honest simpli-*

(b) *Reflections*, p. 296.

“ city,

(i)

"city, he uses more reason too in explaining his meaning, than the BIASS OF INTEREST AND PARTIES will suffer some men of letters to do. (i)"

What can be a more insolent charge upon the *paedobaptists* than this? The *bias of interest and parties*! — Is this *Catholicism*? And yet this came from the pen of one of the *first character* among the *antipaedobaptists*, both for temper and learning.

So that the *stigma of bigotry* is but too justly fixed on the party; since none are allowed to be men of *integrity*, none free from the *biass of interest and parties* but themselves; nay, none *reason or conclude* with the *common sense* of a *rustic*, in the affair of baptism, but themselves.

— Compare these passages of Dr. Gale, with that cited in my title page, from his *Reflections*, p. 6.

And if I do not egregiously mistake, Mr. B's defence has something very feverish in it, if it is not full of bigotry.

He has indeed express'd his indignation under a colour of just resentment for my contempt of him and of his brethren; and for the injuries I had offer'd to his *two discourses*; but that this was no more than a colour, what I have already offer'd, with the following part of the *vindication*, I hope will sufficiently evince.

I would here take notice of Mr. B's mentioning "the poor, despised anabaptists, and his intimating the great contempt and hardships to

(i) *Reflections*, p. 296, 297.

" which

“ which they, of all men, are most expos'd.
 “ Their being *content* to forego some advantages,
 “ which they might enjoy, if they could *think*
 “ and *practise* as their neighbours do; and their
 “ bearing reproach plentifully cast upon them
 “ for venturing to *differ*. (k)”

This sort of representation, I have heard at their publick baptisms, when the exhortations to *courage* and *resolution* has been given, and their submission to *plunging baptism* applauded, as an instance of very *peculiar regard* to the institution of Jesus.

But I would ask, are the *anabaptists* more exposed to *contempt*, *neglect* or *ill-usage* from men, on account of *their way* of baptizing, than others who *dissent* from the established forms of worship. — As to the *meekness* of their spirits, and their *patience* under contradiction, and their *bearing reproach* with a christian spirit, if Mr. B's *defence* may stand as a *sample* of it, they have little room of boasting. — Who he designs to reflect upon as *their neighbours*, that enjoy advantages which they themselves are obliged to forego, from the *greater tenderness* of their consciences, is not my business to take notice of; I know of no advantages I enjoy in the community above them.

Neither can I discern the reason of the *declamation*, *poor and despis'd anabaptists!* They live, for any thing I know, as much *unvillified*, and enjoy as much *liberty* and *freedom* as their neighbours. — It is therefore a poor insinuation,

(k) *Defence*, p. 65, comp. p. 7.

that

that the *anabaptists* are *despised* on account of their venturing to differ. But — If Mr. B's complaint is for want of a *civil establishment* of his practice, I see no remedy but *patience*. — And as to the *courage* requisite to the making, what Mr. B. calls, an *open profession* by baptism, it does not appear to demand *more courage* than to the making an *open profession* over the *memorial rite*. Unless they mean, that such extraordinary courage is needful to go into the *cold water*, in *cold weather*. And as to this, I doubt not but many are obliged to summon up all their resolution to comply with it. And yet, there may perhaps be some reason assigned for it *among themselves*; inasmuch, as *great numbers* of these christian people remain *unbaptized*. So that, *resolution* may be needful for quitting the *rank* and *station* of those *invisible members* of Christ's church. — I hope I do not misrepresent them, since Mr. B. "thinks it consistent with *great catholicism* to deny that any others are *visible members* of the christian church, than those who make *profession of their own faith*. (1)" Which in his *two discourses* he has asserted, *must be done by baptism*. It must, of consequence, be for want of countenance from numbers of their own people, that so much courage is wanting; and not to the *contempt* or *reproach* of others.

To talk therefore of the *poor* and *despised*, at this time of the day, would *much better* become the mouth of an *enthusiast*, whose chief business is to work upon the passions of the *weak*, than

(1) Def. p. 48, 49.

it can become the pen of an *anabaptist*, who thinks religion to be a *reasonable service*.

But yet, if the *anabaptists* do give just ground of *ridicule* from their *manner* of baptizing, they may thank themselves for it. And it is incumbent on them to shew, that plunging in cold water, with manifest *peril* to some constitutions, has not the air of *fanaticism*. That is to say, in such cases where it could not be justified but upon an expectation of some *extraordinary* interpositions of providence in their favour; which seems to be a subject of ridicule.

Should they urge the *danger* that attended *circumcision*. It would be a sufficient answer, that the *mode* of circumcision admitted of no ambiguity in the command that enjoined it; whereas the word *βαπτίζω*, cannot be confin'd in its sense to *plunging*, but as properly signifies a *partial* application of water.

But it seems I had said, “ I cannot but think
“ that the serious *paedobaptist* stands as much ex-
“ pos'd to the *scoff* and *sneer* of men; for it is
“ almost enough to give any thing a good grace,
“ that it has any *oddness* or *peculiarity* in it (m).”

Mr. B. says, “ which *oddness* and *peculiarity*
“ are the very things I had in some parts of
“ my *appendix* made the foundations of the con-
“ tempt cast by me upon their whole body (n).”

I am conscious of no such thing in the *appendix*, as my making the *oddness* and *peculiarity* of their mode of baptism the foundation of my casting contempt on their body. — Tho' I yet

(m) *Append.* p. 40.

(n) *Def.* p. 65.

say, that was *plunging-baptism* to be regarded and complied with, *only* on account of its *peculiarity, singularity* or *oddness*, it would be very agreeable to the taste of the present age.

Nevertheless, this I intended not, nor do intend as a reflexion on the *mode of baptism*, in order to throw contempt on the *whole body* of *adult-baptizers*; but to shew, that they are in no more danger of reproach for their practice, than *infant-baptizers* are for theirs.

Mr. B. farther says, " That my *works* shew " me to be inclin'd to *strife* and *contention* (o)." And he also has intimated what some of my works are; for he says, " *that I have attempt-* " *ed some defences of the christian revelation* (p)."

If Mr. B. does me justice, all my friends are either *prejudic'd*, or *weak*, or *unfaithful* to me; for none of them have ever yet reprov'd me for discovering an inclination to *strife* and *contention*. — But, Mr. B. I presume has done me injury, by representing my *abhorrence of bigotry*, to be a *sovereign contempt of persons*! He has not distinguish'd between the enmity I have to *narrow, imposing, uncharitable* sentiments; and a delight in *reproach, scorn* and *contempt* of men, which is inconsistent with such enmity.

I shall proceed to vindicate my remarks made in the *appendix* upon Mr. B's *two discourses*; and defend my argument for *infant-baptism* against his *defence*.

(o) *Def.* p. 7.

(p) p. 15. Note.



S E C T. I.

Of positive institutions. More particularly, of water-baptism among christians, its origine, design and use.— In the place of circumcision. Righteousness fulfilled in the baptizing of infants, equally with that fulfilled in the baptism of adult persons.



After-baptism I have all along represented as a *Jewish rite*, which *Jesus* adopted, and has appointed the use of, in order, to *initiate* into his church or kingdom; or to *distinguish* men and their families from those who embrace not the christian doctrine. At the *first* preaching of the gospel, men, who embraced it, were *immediately initiated*, together with households, by baptism; and as this was the manifest intention of the *rite* in the apostolic age, it cannot signify *more* in any after-age. And,

All must allow, that the *importance* of any *rite*, is to be estimated from its *use* and *intention*; for even *principles* and *sentiments*, tho' supported on *truth*, cannot, by a just estimation, have their importance carried farther than their *aptitude*, *influence*, or *tendency* to promote moral rectitude. — But, as *baptism*

tism has not any virtue or influence, in a moral sense, to *purify*, or to *save*; but can only *mark out*, or *separate* a person, or *initiate* into a constitution of grace and life, it can be no more than a *positive rite*, tho' *Jesus* should appoint, and an *apostle* administer it. — For baptism no more *secures* the virtue and happiness of a grown person, than of an infant.

Besides, a due attention to the *end* and *design* of baptism, must be of importance in settling the controversy about it. It should seem to be only a *rite of separation*. Thus *John* understood it, when he compared his baptizing with water, to our *Lord's* baptizing with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. The former baptism of our *Lord's*, separated the apostles to the important work of publishing the gospel; the latter shall *separate* the chaff from the wheat; or the wicked from the righteous. — So *St. Paul* understood baptism, when applied to the *Israelites* being separated from their former *task-masters* the *Egyptians* unto *Moses*. — And so the baptism of men and their households did and does *separate* from the infidel world, as the *peculium* of God under *Jesus*.

This *postulate* will shew, that the *quantity* of water is not essential to the idea of baptism; the *end* of baptism being answered as well by the *sprinkling* of water, as by *perfusion*, or by *plunging*.

And will also shew, that a *separation* may as well be made of *infants*, as of *grown persons*; unless there be any *express prohibition* of its being so applied.

Upon which principles I shall build the following *vindication*: being persuaded, that there is no *such prohibition*; but many arguments to be offer'd in favour of such a view of water-baptism; especially, as it answers to the *design* and *end* of *Christ's* coming, which was to *redeem* or *separate* men to himself, and to take *theirs* under his *special care* and *protection*.

Mr. B. is indeed angry with me, as having misrepresented him, *he says*, in the affair of *positive rites*;

rites; and chargeth me “ with surmising, with-
 “ out any occasion, that he intended to express a
 “ false way of reasoning upon the point of ritual in-
 “ stitutions. (a)” Nay, *he says*, “ I begin with a
 “ downright false quotation, and wrong him by
 “ citing a part of his sentence, and leaving the rest
 “ unquoted. (b)”

The truth of the case is this; I have said, “ That
 “ in order to deter and dissuade from a neglect and
 “ contempt of *positive commands*, from *plausible ar-*
 “ *guments*, this is given as an example, *viz. That*
 “ *the absolute necessity of the one, and the manifest infe-*
 “ *riority and subserviency of the other*, is manifest un-
 “ righteousness and injustice towards God. (c)”
 This I quoted from Mr. B’s *two discourses*, p. 7. in
 which he asserts, “ That if we pretend to chuse
 “ for our selves, and to stick to moral righte-
 “ ousness, in the neglect and contempt of positive
 “ commands, such a neglect and contempt as this,
 “ such a chusing and refusing at our own will and
 “ pleasure, let us support it in our own minds by
 “ ever so *plausible reasons*; as for EXAMPLE, *the*
 “ *absolute necessity of the one, and the manifest inferi-*
 “ *ority and subserviency of the other*, is manifest un-
 “ righteousness and injustice towards God.”

Let it be observ’d, I have only quoted the *example*,
 as an *example*; which he had produced to *illustrate*
 his argument by: And I have made the citation *full*
 and *exact*. — If therefore the *example* does not suit
 his reasoning, or does not afford an instance that
 will *illustrate* his argument, is it my fault? Am I
 hence liable to censure? It is unfair treatment, since
 I observed, that Mr. B. has denied that it can be a
proper example. For he says, “ *it is a downright ab-*
 “ *surdity and contradiction in its own nature to reject*
 “ *positive institutions* on the account of their being

(a) *Def. p. 12.*(b) *p. 9.*(c) *Append. p. 3.*

“ *only subservient* to moral purposes ; for if they are
 “ *at all subservient*, that is a *good reason* why we should
 “ obey them. (d)” — Upon which I remarked,
 “ That this, no doubt, is a just way of treating
 “ *positive institutions* ; but then, how this should ever
 “ be esteemed a *plausible reason* for neglecting them,
 “ when it is a *downright absurdity* and *contradiction* in
 “ *its own nature* to reject them on account of their
 “ being *only subservient to moral purposes*, seems diffi-
 “ cult to make appear. (e)”

Again, Mr. B. says, “ That I have represented
 “ him as affirming the *plausible reason*, which he
 “ mentions as an example, to be *the unrighteousness*
 “ and *injustice* : — that I cite a *parenthesis* out of his
 “ sentence, and tell my readers, that he calls the
 “ things mentioned in the parenthesis, *unrighteousness*
 “ and *injustice towards God* ; and for this refers to ap-
 “ pend. p. 3. (f)”

The foundation of this I find not, — and refer
 with freedom to the same *append. p. 3.* This ex-
 ample, I observ’d, can only be defended, from
 mens making it a reason of their wilful neglect of
 the positive institution, as he would insinuate ; —
 but not being able to see how it can be made a rea-
 son of such neglect, I add, “ if it should be under-
 “ stood as expressing false ideas of the distinction
 “ between *positive commands* and *moral righteousness*,
 “ the example is then itself a *false example* and
 “ *delusive*. (g)”

Every one may see, who reads the *appendix*, that
 I had no intention to *weaken* those arguments which
 do properly recommend obligation to *positive com-
 mands* ; but only to preserve that *distinction* which is,
 in the nature of things and in all revelation, made
 between *moral* and *positive commands* ; from p. 3. to
 p. 9. — And in p. 41. I have own’d, “ that

(d) *Two Disc.* p. 10.(e) *Append.* p. 40.(f) *Def.* p. 10.(g) *Append.* p. 3.

“ with

“ with regard to *external testimony*, positive institutions stand upon the same foot as the *doctrines* do to which they refer ; for he who said, *I am the resurrection and the life* ; said also, *this do in remembrance of me.*”

But altho’ the *authority* of Jesus with respect to *positive institutions* is unquestionably binding, so far as men can discern the *intention* or *design* of them ; yet surely we cannot with *truth* say, that the authority of Jesus in these *inferior* things, is of equal importance to his authority in those *greater* things to which these inferior things are *manifestly subservient*. And because that *positive rites* (such as *baptism* and the *supper*) are *manifestly inferior* to *moral righteousness*, hence we conclude it is that they are not universally discerned with the same *perspicuity* and *clearness*, even by some pious and sincere christians ; and consequently, their influence is not so *uniform* upon honest minds as is the importance of *things* of moral, immutable, eternal obligation.

Nevertheless, there certainly is a *decency*, a *decorum* (b), a *becomingness* in observing the positive institutions of Jesus, in all such who perceive the *reason* of them, or discern the *compass* of their obligation.

Mr. B. seems indeed, to me, to have carried their importance much *too* high ; which must *offend*, rather than *conciliate* the mind of an infidel. For he says, “ If there be a good proof of a divine institution, good proof that God requires us to use a certain *rite* or *ceremony*, tho’ in our eyes ever so mean, and tho’ we ourselves are not let into the design of it ; yet to refuse compliance in such a case, is downright disobedience, and a violation of God’s authority ; which is as certainly immorality, tho’ of a *different kind*, as the breaking what we usually call a *moral precept*: For tho’ we can abstractedly conceive of things as being good

(b) *ὁρεσεν* ἐς iv. *Matth.* iii. 15.

“ and right, without immediate regard to any signification of God’s will concerning them ; yet
 “ there is in reality nothing fit or just for us to do,
 “ but what becomes so by means of God’s disposing
 “ things in that order, from which the several relations and obligations in life arise. (i)” And he says,
 “ in positive institutions, the *mere will* of the law-giver, considering who the law-giver is, is a *sufficient reason* for the subject’s obedience. (k)”

I am not sure that mankind has ever been obliged, by any positive institution, from the *mere will* of the law-giver. For they all seem to have had respect to such a disposition of things, from which their relation and obligation has arisen ; and therefore the *mere will* of the law-giver has not been the *sole* reason for the subject’s obedience.

For, as to the *reason* of the rite of circumcision, Dr. Patrick thus expresses himself ; he says, “ The
 “ most plain and obvious reason is, that it might
 “ be an apt token of the divine covenant made
 “ with *Abraham* and his posterity : that God would
 “ multiply their seed, and make them as the stars
 “ of heaven, *Gen. xv. 5.* It is probable also, that
 “ this part was chosen rather than any other to
 “ make them sensible that this was a divine sacrament. For nothing but God’s institution
 “ could at first engage men to lay that part bare
 “ which nature hath covered. (l)”

I would beg leave to add, that it seem’d to intimate the obligation they should be under of guarding against the excesses of *bodily impurity*, which greatly prevailed in *Abraham’s* day among the nations. This is evident from the repeated danger *Sarah* had been in of having her chastity violated. See *Gen. xii. 15. xx. 2.*

(i) *Two disc.* p. 19.

(k) *Ibid.*

(l) *Comment. on Gen.* p. 290.

Besides,

Besides, the want of chastity had occasioned that swell of impiety which brought on the deluge, or the destruction of the old world. See *Gen.* vi. 4, 5, 6.

There was therefore a manifest reason or fitness, for this positive rite being made the token of God's covenant with *Abraham*.

That the rite was not applied till the eighth day, the above writer has assigned this reason, viz. "because till then they were look'd upon as imperfect, as not yet sufficiently cleansed and purged; for which reason beasts (we find afterwards) were not accepted by God till seven days were passed after their birth, *Exod.* xxii. 30.(m)"

The rite of circumcision stands thus, *Gen.* xvii. 8. God had promised the land of *Canaan* to *Abraham* and to his seed after him, for an everlasting possession; which covenant, says God, *Ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised, v. 10.* Hence the reason, design, or intention of the rite was evident, viz. the keeping them a distinct people to whom the promise was made. So that as this was the tenure of their possession, it was, at the same time, a reconciling reason to their submitting to the rite. Now had this been the whole compass of the *Abrahamic* covenant, or the whole intention of the rite; at the time of their becoming possessors of the promised land, one would have thought the reason of the rite had been vacated. But this was not the case; the *Abrahamic* covenant intended more; for God had promised that *Abraham* should be the father of many nations, v. 5. which promise is made more explicite, ch. xxii. 18. viz. that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And hence the reason of the rite continued till the coming of the *Messiah*.

(m) Comment. on *Gen.* p. 293.

The descendants of *Abraham* might therefore see a reason for their compliance with the *positive rite*, as it was the *seal* of the *Abrabamic covenant* in which they gloried.

Thus in the *passover*, another rite enjoined their observance thro' all their generations, they had the reason assigned, viz. God's wonderful appearance in favour of Israel, in that dreadful night, when his angel destroy'd all the FIRST BORN of Egypt. It was but fit that some memorial of such an interposal of divine tenderness, in passing over the houses of the Israelites, should be instituted.

In like manner, if we turn to the christian rites of *baptism* and the *supper*, we see a reason, a suitability in the one and in the other, e. g.

In *baptism*; — forasmuch as the *Abrabamic covenant* had had its accomplishment, in the coming of the *promised seed*, who was to bless all nations; and the *seal* of the *old covenant* was now cancelled, it having done its office in preserving one people and family distinct: — It was therefore proper, highly fit that a rite should take place, that should every where intimate, that the old rite was cancelled; and that no distinction any more remain'd of *sect* or of *nation*, in the view of the *new covenant*. — And the application of *baptismal water* to men who embraced christianity and to their offspring, did, and does every where signify, the *unlimited extent* of that favour and protection which the *gospel covenant* would exhibit — But as *faith* in *Abraham*, was previously requisite to his having the *seal* of the *covenant of peculiarity* applied to him and to his seed, as well as in every *profelyte* to the *Jewish* religion, before he and his children were admitted to have the *seal*; so *faith* in the *gospel*, and *repentance* towards God was previously requisite in such persons who embraced christianity, to their having the *gospel seal* applied to them and to their offspring, or households

households; which *pre-requisites* do continue in every age.

Notwithstanding this, since the *history* of these *positive rites*, [used, either under the *covenant of peculiarity*, or under the *gospel covenant*] gives us no reason to imagine, that the subjects of either covenant, were to have a *change* in the manner of applying the *seals*: But as *Abraham's faith* entitled him and his *infant descendants* to the seal of circumcision; so the *faith* of converted *Jews* and *Gentiles* entitled them and their families or descendants to the seal of baptism; it follows, that to insist upon the *posterity* of converted christians being educated in the same *faith* with their parents, *before* they receive the seal of baptism, does appear to be an *innovation* upon the *order* or *economy* of *positive, initial rites*. — Nor is there any thing more evident in the *gospel history*, than a *correspondency* in these initial rites, as to the *subjects* of them. For, as *Abraham's faith* entitled his whole household, and all his male descendants to the *same rite* that was applied to himself, so upon the *faith* of the convert to christianity, his whole household, or her whole household were entitled to the *same seal*; and had it actually applied.

Nor could the *Jews* mistake in this article, since they always were address'd unto, under this encouraging view of the *gospel covenant*, *viz. that it included ALL THEIRS with them.*

So our Lord speaks to *Zaccheus*, *Luke xix. 9.* — *This day is salvation come to THIS HOUSE. — The promise is to you and to YOUR CHILDREN.* *St. Peter, Acts ii. 39.* — *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and THINE HOUSE,* *Acts xvi. 31.* — So *Cornelius* was bid to send for *Peter*, who should tell him words *whereby he and ALL HIS HOUSE should be saved,* *Acts xi. 14.* — So *Crispus* is said to believe on the Lord *with all his house*; and many *Corinthians*, doubtless, with their houses, if heads of families, were

were baptized, *Acts* xviii. 8. So Stephenas with his household were baptized, *1 Cor.* i. 16. — Also Lydia and her household, *Acts* xvi. 15. — Instances sufficient to shew, that the seal or token of the new covenant had a correspondency to that of the *Abrahamic seal*; inasmuch, as if a man believed, his whole house were esteemed holy, and admitted to the benefits of the gospel covenant; and consequently, to the *baptismal seal or token*. If a man believed, he should be saved and HIS HOUSE.

And as the rite of *circumcision* was to distinguish a family and people till the promise was accomplished, and then become null, so the rite of *baptism*, which succeeds it, should be perpetuated; as it is a symbol of the *undistinguishing* grace and favour of the christian covenant, and intimates, the *extensiveness* of it to *Jews and Gentiles*, among all nations, and all ages. Besides, it should be continued as expressive of the *purity* of the christian constitution, and may well fill up the interval between our Lord's baptizing with the *Holy Ghost*, and his baptizing with *fire*, viz. At that period, when he will come with his fan in his hand, and will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner, but burn the chaff with fire unquenchable, *Matth.* iii. 11, 12.

Nevertheless, I have observed, that Mr. B. carries his notions of positive institutions too high; notwithstanding in his defence, p. 17. he says, “by considering who this law-giver is, he plainly shews his belief, that he never appoints any one ritual institution for the sake of mere will and pleasure, but for wise, and gracious and useful purposes, tho’ it may not be always expedient for us to be told what those purposes are.” — As he instances in the *Mosaic oeconomy* itself, — and says, “He does not believe that there was one ritual institution enjoined for mere will and pleasure, in the mind

“ of

“ of the law-giver himself, — tho’ it was not need-
 “ ful, nor perhaps fitting, that they should then be
 “ acquainted with all those purposes. As to great
 “ numbers of those institutions, it has been abun-
 “ dantly proved by judicious authors, that they
 “ were wisely calculated to serve good purposes:
 “ And if we were thoroughly acquainted with all the
 “ circumstances of the people to whom they were en-
 “ joined, and all the dispositions and customs of their
 “ heathen neighbours, and all the views of the
 “ divine mind to future times, I make no doubt
 “ (says he) but we should see wise and good reasons
 “ for every particular institution. But God, it
 “ seems, tho’ he knew sufficient reasons for every
 “ institution, did not think proper to acquaint the
 “ people with them.”

Upon this, “ he would ask the gentleman who
 “ is so fearful of shewing *too much* regard to the will
 “ of the law-giver,” several questions. — “ As
 “ whether the *Jews* were obliged in conscience to
 “ obey the institutions given them? Whether there
 “ was a reason sufficient to demand their obedi-
 “ ence? or might they refuse because the particular
 “ intentions were not published? — And whether
 “ any man under the gospel could be excused from
 “ submitting to the ordinances of baptism and the
 “ Lord’s supper, even in case, he knew nothing
 “ more relating to them, than the command of
 “ Christ, and the proof of his having authority
 “ from God to demand obedience from the subjects
 “ of his kingdom.”

Mr. B. farther says, “ he should have no great
 “ opinion of a man’s fidelity, let him talk ever so
 “ loudly of moral obligation, (n)” *i. e.* if he would
 not even in such case submit to the institutions.

This, I apprehend is no more than the putting a
string of questions, upon *mere hypothesis*. For altho’ I
 doubt not, but there was a *reason* for every one of

the *Jewish injunctions*, and do think that learned men have well accounted for numbers of them; yet I am not sure, that that people were not better acquainted with their *own circumstances*, and with the *dispositions and customs* of their heathen neighbours, than even those *learned men*, who, at this distance, have rationally accounted for many of their institutions; and therefore, I am not sure, that God did not think proper to acquaint that people with the reason of them. I am, on the contrary, of opinion, that they did discern *some reason* of every injunction, besides the *will and pleasure of the law-giver*.

In the two institutions of the *circumcision* and the *passover*, the *design or reason* was obvious; but if any *ceremonial* was enjoined without farther reasons than *mere will and pleasure*, it does not suit the case before us. — And as to the *gospel dispensation*, I think myself clear in the point, that no one thing is enjoined the christian from the *mere pleasure* of the law-giver. Nor do I know how we should be able to prove that Christ had authority from God to demand our obedience to *such things* which had nothing more than *mere pleasure* to support the demand.

A writer, who seems to understand well the *temper of Jesus*, has observed, “ That positive appointments are of a quite different nature from *arbitrary impositions*; with which they are too often confounded. The idea of *arbitrary* (he thinks) implies a *weakness* incompatible to the divine nature, whose perfection it is to do nothing but for some *wise reason* and for some *good end*. Nor can such a blemish ever cleave to the government, any more than to the nature of God, as an *arbitrary* act; that is, an act of the divine will without a *wise reason*, and for no good end. (o)”

(o) Dr. Grosvenor's *moral obligation to positive appointments*, p. 23.

Command-

Commandments may indeed have been given, in extraordinary cases, to try the faith of particular persons, where the *reason* or *end* has not been obvious when given; as in the case of *Abraham's* offering up his son *Isaac*. Or, a submission may have been demanded to a *transient* rite, such as that *baptismal* one, mentioned, *John xiii. begin.* — But then, in the former case, *Abraham* was not suffered to carry his obedience into *full execution*, but learn'd the *end* of the trial without it. — And in the other, our Lord did not demand submission from *mere authority*, but assured *Peter*, that what he did to him then, he should know, which he explained immediately after the washing was over; and the rite was not applied by *Peter* who was ignorant of its intention, at the time of its application, but by *Jesus*, who well knew the intention of it.

N. B. It might here be ask'd, What *righteousness* was fulfilled by the disciples *consent* to this rite, when they were ignorant of the design of it, that may not be fulfilled by baptism upon infants?

Yet, these *instances* will not support the argument for an *implicite observance* of positive rites, where *mere pleasure* only makes the demand. For,

Our blessed Lord always addresseth to men, as *reasonable* beings; and demands no *credit*, no *obedience* but what is worthy *reasonable nature*. He ever took the utmost pains to convince his audience, that he only wanted men to *reason and reflect*, — to use their powers, and to be determined by the weight of evidence. — Hence, I cannot think that he ever intended that *mere authority* should be sufficient to command our obedience.

And yet, the *authority* of *Jesus*, will, doubtless, give great weight even to a *moral precept*. — But I SAY unto you, love your enemies. — A new commandment I GIVE unto you, that ye love one another. And this authority will enforce a *positive institution*, such as

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that of *baptism* or the *supper*. — But not this, unless there appear some *suitableness* in the rite, to answer some *known end* worthy of the institution.

And thus in the *initial rite*, grown persons discern *baptism* to be expressive of their *separation* to God in Jesus, and of their obligation to personal purity. — And they likewise discern, that it can be applied to their *offspring* without *distinction of sex*, which *circumcision* could not be. — And as to the *supper*, every one may see, that it has a *more extensive* blessing to commemorate, than that which the *passover* had.

Upon the whole, I must own, that I can have a good opinion of a man's *fidelity*, tho' he should object to a *positive rite*, for which he can see no reason, but *mere will and pleasure*. And herein I differ from Mr. B.

But Mr. B. seems to say, that *positive institutions* oblige as much from *mere pleasure*, as if the reason of them was discerned. His words are these, " In deed he (*i. e.* God or Christ) is pleased, under the dispensation of the gospel, to let us know the *gracious* and *useful purposes* proposed by him in the institutions enjoined to us. But this ALTERS NOTHING in the nature of the obligation. (p)"

Here, I am of opinion, Mr. B. has fully explained himself; and shewn the *undue stress* which he lays upon *mere authority*. — And by it, no doubt, he greatly obscures the light which we have into the *nature of obligation*. For surely, to know the *gracious* and *useful purposes* of an institution, must make *great alteration* in the nature of the obligation, to what it would be, if *mere will and pleasure* gave us the whole condition or state of it. So that, Mr. B. would make *positive commands* to have as much weight as *rational* and *moral obligation*; nay, if I mistake not,

(b) Def. p. 17. beg.

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he has set *mere will* ABOVE the rank of *moral obligation*; since a knowledge of the *gracious* and *useful purposes* which there are in a positive injunction, *alters nothing in the nature of the obligation*. But had he attended to the reasoning of Dr. Grofsenor in the tract before refer'd to; he would have found a manifest distinction justly made, even between positive commands whose *fitness* is *discernable*, and moral obligation. Forasmuch as, the Dr. says, "Some things are *absolutely* necessary to salvation, and in their own nature, without which there can be no salvation at all. — But no *merely positive* appointments are necessary in this sense, (*i. e.*) *absolutely* and in their own nature. — And yet, a disposition to obey divine orders, wherever they are discerned, either *positive* or *moral*, is part of that holiness *without which no man shall see the Lord*. — A *sacrament* is a positive rite, and not to be compared with moral virtue, but a disposition to obey God's order, is moral virtue. (q)"

Mr. B. is greatly offended with me for charging the anabaptists with *calling in question* the *capacity*, or *integrity* of all that declare for infant-baptism. That if I designed this reflection against him alone, I did very wrong. For he has done no otherwise than given the reasons why he differs from his brethren. (r)"

I have already hinted at the manner of his reasoning or defending his practice, as *ensorious* and *uncharitable*. And I yet insist upon it that *it is like the reasoning of a protestant* to reflect upon him and the generality of the defenders of adult-plunging-baptism, as having called in question both the *integrity* and *capacity* of *infant-baptizers*; Mr. B's two discourses are not to me intelligible, if they do not charge men with being either *weak* in their *intellectuals*, or

(q) See his *moral obligation*, prop. i. ii. iii.

(r) *Def.* p. 63, 64.

else dishonest, who see not the reason, or comply not with the practice of *adult-baptizers*. For I ask, in my turn, has he once so much as own'd that there is any christian baptism but what is *adult*, and by plunging? Has he any where own'd, that men may belong to *Christ's visible church* who are not so baptized? In both those discourses and in the defence of them, he asserts the contrary, if he asserts any thing, "That according to the tenour of the "new testament (the profession which should give "a right to baptism) must be a *personal* profession, "and that *baptism* was designed to be the token of "a *personal, voluntary* submission to Christ. — That "to this agrees the PLAINEST SENSE of the com- "mission itself, of the EXAMPLE of baptism; "and of the REASONINGS upon it. — And that "there is NO ROOM for conjectural inferences from "the constitution of the *Mosaic* law, or from the "Abrahamic covenant that went before it. (s)"

Which, if true, both the *integrity* and *capacity* of infant-baptizers stand impeached. And they must "answer for themselves (as he says, I must do,) in "administ'ring what they call *baptism* to infants, "and admitting them as *visible* members of the "church. (t)"

I wish Mr. B. had thought how he can answer it, if he should be found to have *narrowed* the church of Christ, without any manifest authority. — The *contracting* scheme is not greatly favoured by the *genius* and *spirit* of christianity. — And for my own part, I declare, that it is matter of grief to me, that *any* modes are made the terms of christian communion; since I am persuaded, there is an unavoidable tendency in their being so to destroy that *charity*, which is the *bond of perfectness*.

(s) Def. p. 47. comp. two disc. p. 42, 43.

(t) Def. p. 49.

Farther, *baptism*, as Mr. B. has placed it, don't seem to have that place which it ought to have in the *economy* of positive rites. The *supper*, in my humble opinion, stands far better in the place, where he puts *baptism*. Forasmuch as men do, *over the memorials of Christ's death*, make a profession of their own *faith* in him, and of their *hopes* and *expectations* from him.

The *Lord's supper* does, in its own nature, appear to be better adapted for the christian's confession of sin, and the thankful profession of his hope of pardon, than baptism: Since the *cup* is the commemorative symbol of *remission of sins* in Christ's blood, shed for many.

Again, altho' baptism should be allowed to be a significant *seal* or *token* of mens being initiated into a dispensation of *pardon* and *life* to persons who have renounced a state of *infidelity* or *vice* antecedent to their baptism, yet, as it is not *repeated*, it can exhibit no profession of repentance, nor any sense of pardon respecting those sins committed after baptism. Whereas the *supper*, in the repeated celebration of it, is suited to excite our penitency, and to renew and confirm our faith and hope in the divine mercy.

So that the children of christian parents baptized in infancy, will have a *proper opportunity* of acknowledging themselves sinners, who stand in need of mercy. Which Mr. B. seems to have made baptism, *adult-baptism* necessary for; since he says, "That we are to shew, that even those who are convinced of the truth and divine authority of the christian religion are not, according to the mind of Christ, required to take on them by baptism the profession of it" [*i.e.* of repentance.] (u)

Should I ask Mr. B. whether the sense of obligation to *repentance* does not operate very early in

(u) *Def.* p. 24.

young minds, who are conscious that they have done amiss? I dare say he would own it does. And perhaps in many *much sooner* than he would chuse to baptise them. — But surely it cannot be the mind of Christ that a profession of repentance should be deferred to baptism at *adult* age: Or have its *emphasis* at the application of that rite; since its obligation is as early as a sense of *guilt* and *demerit* is discerned by the sinner.

To proceed, Mr. B. charges me with a capital crime, “for cramming into five lines of quotation, what he has made the substance of the greatest part of his *discourse*, and upon which he has laid the *greatest stress* for finding out the mind of Christ. (x)”

To make satisfaction for which neglect, I would observe, that as to baptism's being called the *baptism of repentance*, upon which Mr. B. has dilated from p. 31, — 38. of his two discourses; — I cannot but at present be of opinion, that the term *repentance*, when first applied to baptism, had this idea essential to it, viz. *mens change of mind* (y); or their *renouncing* the religions they had before professed, either of *Gentilism* or *Judaism*. — For altho' baptism demanded a *change* of vicious habits in all such who embraced the gospel, to any good purpose; yet, I doubt not but there were many baptized with this baptism, who were *habitually pious* and *holy persons*. Among such, I reckon the *guileless Nathanael* to have been one, and the *devout Cornelius* to have been another. And I see no reason to exclude either *Lydia*, or the *Eunuch*, or *Crispus*. — To suppose baptism to have been the *baptism of repentance* to such pious persons, must chiefly intend, their *renouncing Judaism*, or import the *change of their religion*.

(x) Def. p. 50.

(y) μετενοια.

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And if we consider it in this light, we shall have a reason assignable for our Lord's submitting to baptism. As he was by it *initiated* into a publick character, introducing a dispensation that was to *abrogate* and *dissolve* the *Jewish* dispensation.

I might take this opportunity to observe the *easy transition* that there was made between the *rite of circumcision* and *baptism*, — between the *passover rite* and the *supper*, — and between the change of the *Jewish sabbath*, to the christians observance of the *first day* of the week, in honour to the resurrection of *Jesus*. — But I only leave the hint to the consideration of my reader.

To proceed, I understand *baptism* as a rite properly applicable to the *infants* of professing christians, tho' they can neither be said to *repent*, as expressing a change of their religion, nor *repent* of any course of action; forasmuch as it does not appear to be the seal of *actual pardon*, in its original intention, even to the *adult person* who embraced christianity; but only a *rite* by which he was *initiated* into a constitution of *grace*, wherein he might be enabled to discern the *doctrine of pardon*, in its strongest light. This seems to have been the *true state* of the case, since numbers were baptized for the *remission of sins*, who were *vicious persons*, and became no true penitents. *Infants* therefore appear to me the proper subjects of this *baptism of repentance*, as they are initiated by it into a constitution of *pardon* and of *life*.

The denial of baptism to *infants* of professing christians, appears to me as having some marks of *cruelty* in it; since infants, as I have elsewhere observed, are certainly subjected to death in consequence of the *one offence*. But as baptism is the *initiating rite* into a constitution which declares *that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*, this rite applied to infants becomes a proper, significant seal or token of *REMISSION*, not of *sin* or *personal*

personal demerit, but of death, or of their deliverance from under the dominion of it. So that the application of it, may minister comfort to parents whose offspring die in infancy: And should teach them not to sorrow as those who are without hope. It is not therefore setting a *seal* to a blank: or an *over-officious* way of applying water. — But it is expressive of *truth*, as it asserts the *extent* of the redeemer's care and dominion. — Which the *denial* of this initial rite to infants does not do.

I know that Dr. Gale has said, “ That *paedobaptists* are at a loss to determine, what else but *original sin* infants should be baptized for. — And concludes, that if children are not baptized for actual nor original sin, it necessarily follows, that they are not to be baptized at all. (z)”

But his *premises* and *conclusion* seem to have no good foundation.

And Mr. B. “ would not have me too positive, “ that under the dispensation of the gospel, Christ's ordinance of baptism must needs be administered “ to the same subjects, as circumcision was in the “ same covenant made with *Abraham* and under the “ *Mosaic* law, whether Christ himself thought this “ proper or not. If Christ had thought it proper, “ and suited to the dispensation he came to publish; we are satisfied he would have given as “ plain directions for the baptizing of infants, as “ we know he has given for the baptizing of grown “ persons, upon their actual profession of their faith “ in him. (a)”

Mr. B. has never yet proved, that according to the new testament account of baptism, the children of professing christians were ever *forbid* being thus brought to Christ, or *devoted* to God in him, as the infants of God's people had all along been own'd by an *initiating rite* down from *Abraham*: Or

(z) *Reflections*, p. 404.

(a) *Def.* p. 63.

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that there is any more impropriety in their being own'd as members of God's visible church, as they had been before own'd to be : Or that any thing in the christian doctrine forbids us to look upon the branches being *holy* along with their roots. But the contrary does appear. And why our Lord should *expressly mention* the application of the initiating rite to infants of professing christians, as *circumcision* had been under the former dispensations, any more than his *expressly* mentioning that the *supper* should take place of the *Jewish passover*, does not appear. — Nor has Mr. B. proved that there is the *least intimation* of christian parents being obliged to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, *before* they had solemnly devoted them to the Lord. — So that the *contrary* yet appears ; since if Christ had designed any *such alteration* with regard to the treatment of infants, among a people who had been ever accustomed to the application of an *initial rite* to their infants, we have great reason to conclude our Lord would have been *very express* in signifying it.

And here I would observe, that the weight of the debate rests upon the decision of the following question.

The question is, *Whether our Lord's not having particularly and expressly specified INFANTS in the baptismal-commission, does [all circumstances taken together] amount to a prohibition of their baptism ? Or, whether [taking in all circumstances] an express prohibition was not necessary to warrant us in denying baptism to infants ?*

For my own part, I think there can be no reason assigned why our Lord should *neglect* to give an *express prohibition*, if it was his will that they should not be baptized. When I consider how *infants* had been treated under the *patriarchal*, and the *Mosaic* dispensations. — When I consider how our Lord did personally treat them. — And when I take notice of

several expressions of his *apostles* in their favour. *Particularly*, that of children becoming *boly* upon the faith of a parent, who otherwise would have been *unclean*.

If it should be asked, *that since God had so expressly enjoined circumcision to Abraham's infant posterity, why was not Christ as express in his injunction of baptism to the infant-posterity of christian converts?*

I should say, it was not necessary; since by plain inference they would see it to be the *design* of the institution: Unless they could suppose, that God's oeconomy of grace to our world, which has been gradually *opening* and *enlarging* ever since *Abraham's* time till the coming of the *Messiah*, should then *abridge* and *curtail* the significations of favour to the human family!

When, *on the contrary*, the kingdom of the *Messiah* did carry those significations to their *zenith* of perfection, or gave them their highest amplification or enlargement. — What a strange and unnatural inference would it be against ourselves and offspring to suppose, that our Lord should *resume* a grant of favour made to *Abraham*, and in him to all that should *express like faith* with him!

Grants of favour are always in force till a *resumption* of them takes place. Which *resumption*, in the case before us, Mr. B. should point out.

But that *infants* are capable subjects of *rights*, *privileges*, *grants*, or *favours*, tho' incapable of the sense of obligation whilst *infants*, the *greatest lawyers* have allowed. For as *Puffendorf* says, “ When any thing
“ is to be transfer'd on a child, in way of *gift* or
“ *legacy*, at first view, such a donation may seem
“ invalid, because *acceptance* is a necessary condition
“ required in the *receiver*, which cannot be per-
“ formed without *deliberate consent*, and therefore
“ not without the full use of reason. But because
“ it would be an *intolerable hardship* to make chil-
“ dren incapable of these advantages, on account

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“ of their *immaturity*, when, for that very reason,
 “ they have most need of the assistance of others;
 “ it is most agreeable to equity, that another per-
 “ son should *accept* this bounty in their name.—And
 “ for this trust, no man is so fit as the father. (b)”

The *law of nature and of nations* has ever allowed parents such a propriety in their *infant-offspring*, as to chuse their *guardians* for them when in view of their own death; and is it not *equally* right and fit, that they should, by the laws of God, be allowed to put them under the *same divine protection* with themselves whilst living? And this by a *solemn act* of dedication. Especially, as they and their parents are equally subjected to an *universal evil* without their own *consent* or *choice*, *viz. Death*. They must therefore have an *equal* need of the same remedy: And of consequence, as baptism did initiate the first christians into this *scheme of life*, their *infants*, by the most obvious reason, should be so initiated.—And till *death* does exempt the *infants* of christians from its stroke, their claim to this *seal* of the covenant of life must illude the force of all objection.

This is in perfect harmony with the design of the commission which our Lord gave his apostles, *viz. to baptize all nations*.

So that there was no manner of occasion for our Lord's *expressly* mentioning infants; since, by the most natural inference or implication, they are included in the commission.—The *supper* is allow'd to be properly partook of by the females, from *inference* or *implication*,—and many other things in christian practice might be mentioned.

As to the *rite of circumcision*, we might observe farther, that from its being attended with *pain* and *danger*, it demanded a *more explicate* command, with a *penalty* to enforce it; since no man has a right to inflict *pain* or expose to *danger* his *infant-offspring*,

(b) *Of the law of nature, &c. B. vi. ch. ii. sect. viii.*

but with a view to prevent a greater evil, or to procure a *desirable* good. Hence, the omission of circumcision, was threatned with a *cutting off* from God's people, Gen. xvii. 14. the *cutting off*, the *septuagint* renders by a word which signifies to *destroy* or *exterminate*, (c)—and so the *Chaldee* is observed to render it. (d)

But no occasion for such an *express* mention of infants being baptized under so *severe* a penalty, since baptism perform'd by *perfusion* or by *sprinkling* is attended with no *pain* or *danger* at all. — And to infer from the change of a *severe* and *less comprehensve* rite, into a rite that is *easy* and *more comprehensve*, as including both male and female, to infer from this *change* the *exclusion of both*, is surely very preposterous and absurd! — I might add, that the *antipaedobaptists* who insist upon an *express command* for the baptism of infants, without considering the manifest consequential reasons on which such baptism is supported, do venture to *expressly forbid* without any scripture-authority for so doing.

Men have no reason to condemn the baptism of infants on account of their *immature* state, since when we consider the origine of *moral entities*, or do oppose the condition of man to that of irrational animals, we shall find his *humanity* or natural state obliging to certain duties, and giving a title to certain rights, which he is said to enter upon very early :

For, says *Puffendorf*, “ this we conceive ought to
“ be fixed on the very first moment, when any
“ one may be truly called a man, tho' he as yet
“ wants those perfections which will follow his na-
“ ture in a longer course : That is, whensoever
“ he begins to enjoy life and sense, tho his mother
“ hath not yet deliver'd him into the world. Now
“ because the obligations cannot be fulfilled by

(c) ἐξολοβρευθήσεται.

(d) See *Ainsworth* on the place.

“ him,

“ him, without he understand his own nature, and
 “ the ways of working, they for that reason do
 “ not actually exert their force, till he is able to
 “ square his actions by some rule, and to distinguish
 “ them by their proper differences. But the *rights*,
 “ on the contrary, date their validity from the
 “ very beginning of our being; inasmuch as they
 “ engage other persons already arrived at the full
 “ use of reason, to such and such performances
 “ towards us, and may turn to our benefit, even
 “ whilst we are incapable of apprehending the
 “ favour.” (e)

The baptizing of the *infants* of Christian parents,
 has therefore something in it very suitable to the
 Law of Nature and of nations, and cannot be
 said to be *premature*, since the humanity of the
 subject has already took place.

It is consequently too trifling to say, that be-
 cause infants are not, in so many words, appointed
 to be baptized, *as, you shall baptize all the infants of
 believers*, that therefore they should not; since the
nature and *design* of the rite so applied, harmonizes
 with reason, truth, former dispensations of positive
 rites, and with the condition of the first Christians.

It is no objection that *infant-baptism* is, at best,
 built upon *inference* and *deduction*. Supposing this,—
 so are many *moral* duties and obligations: As
 our Lord has plainly shewn, in that precept, *that
 whatsoever we would that others should do to us, we
 should do even the same to them*. And moreover, both
 the *law* and the *prophets* urge moral obligation upon
 this principle.

There is an easy and natural deduction in the
 case before us; for children being thus devoted to
 God by baptism, have their duty to their parents
 enforced, by doing all *in the name of that Lord* to
 whom they have been devoted, and whose *name* has

(e) *Of the Law of Nature, &c.* B. I. ch. I. Sect. vii. thus

thus been named upon them. But without such a dedication they will not see themselves obliged, as thus *separated, i. e.* if we allow that baptism may be said to have any additional obligation to that of natural duty. *Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right, Eph. vi. 1.* It is supposed that *children* were exhorted to this behaviour, where one parent was an *heathen*, the other a *convert* to christianity; (f) and if so, the children must be understood as baptized; which they had a right to be, if *only one* parent was a christian, 1 Cor. vii. 14. But if it is the duty of christian's children to obey their parents *in the Lord*, as early as they are capable of discerning the obligation, they must see it resulting from their having been *devoted* or *separated* to the christian name or character, which is *equally* done by baptism to them and to their parents.

The argument from deduction briefly stands thus.

AGAINST *infant-baptism*

1. The plea is *silence* about them.
2. Not only no express mention in the precept, but none but *adult* persons are taken notice of, as baptized. *Therefore infants are excluded.*

FOR *infant-baptism*

1. *Silence* no more against than *for* them.
2. Households mentioned as baptized in virtue of the *faith* of their heads. Infants had ever been received into covenant with their parents since *Abraham*. — The *gospel* covenant, and the *Abrahamic* the same — infants actually concern'd in the death of Jesus — personally owned and blessed by him; and

(f) See *Pyle's Paraphrase*. Preface to the Ephesians, p. 41. declared

declared to be the standards of humility and purity to his disciples: *of such is the kingdom of heaven.*—No precept or example for christians bringing up their children in the christian faith till of mature age before baptism.

3. *Faith and repentance* requisite qualifications for baptism. *Therefore &c.*

3. *Faith and repentance* are requisite in adult persons; and so *Abraham* was commanded to be circumcised and his family because of his faith. But baptism may as well be applied to infants on the *faith* of their parents, as circumcision was applied on the *faith* of *Abraham*.

4. Our Lord was baptized at adult age. *Therefore &c.*

4. In Jesus, *faith* and *repentance* were not prerequisites; — in favour of infants.

5. The commission is to *teach* all nations baptizing them. *Therefore &c.*

5. Children are the proper, natural parts of all baptized nations or people; and therefore should be baptized.

6. Infant-baptism *only* to be defended on *inference* or *deduction*.

6. *Inference* or *deduction* so very plain and easy in favour of infant-baptism, that we imagine scarce any thing more plainly deduced from the

7. If baptism be a seal of a covenant, infants are not capable subjects of it, as they are not at the age of consent. For a covenant is a *compact* or *agreement* between *two* parties, at least.

8. The *conditions* of the gospel covenant are faith and repentance, but infants cannot perform the *conditions*, therefore should not have the seal.

the given circumstances of any general principle. The *voice of reason*, the *law of nature* and of *nations* lend their aid in support of the deduction.

7. Baptism seems to be as properly a *seal* of a covenant, as circumcision was. And infants are capable subjects of having the *seal*, tho' not, at the age of consent; since *God's covenant*, is more properly a *testament* or *will*, than a compact. *In which God is one*. The *principal* or *only* party making the *testament*, or *promise*, see *Gal. iii. 17,—21*. Therefore infants are as proper subjects of this covenant, as grown persons are.

8. Infants are subject to death, and that by virtue of the one offence, but as in *Adam* all die, so in *Christ* shall all be made alive—infants have then a share and concern in the gospel covenant as a *scheme of life*, and therefore should be acknowledged as the legatees of that

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There seems to have been a great *suitableness* in a *converted Jewish parent's* laying aside very gladly, the painful rite of circumcision, and applying in its stead, to his next born male infant, the *baptismal rite*; as hereby he gave evidence of his *repentance and change of mind* with regard to the *religious rite* in which he had before gloried. And I fancy Mr. B. would think it a strong evidence of a *Jew's* sincere repentance, or of his heartily *renouncing Judaism*, should he see such a *convert* applying *baptismal water* to his child, born after his own conversion, who, before his conversion, had always applied to his male children the *rite of circumcision*. — To proceed,

Mr. B. makes no scruple of declaring, “ that he believes great *Catholicism* to be consistent with denying that any other are *visible members of Christ's church*, than those who make profession of their *own faith*.” (g)

If by *making profession of their own faith*, he intends only such who are baptized in *adult age*, his catholicism may indeed be accounted *great*, as it is of the *marvellous, or mystical* kind; and will agree with that of those churches who deny any to be *christians*, or in a *salvable state*, but such as are within their *own pale* — but surely this is not so properly *Catholicism*, as that of allowing all to be *visible members of the christian church*, who profess to believe in *Jesus*, whether they are baptized in *infancy*, or in *adult age*, or have not been baptized at all, which is my *Catholicism*, and that of many of my friends.

(g) *Disf. p. 47.*

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I would

I would here observe, that as the *adult-baptizers* seem to lay their *whole stress* upon the *consent* of the subject of baptism; I do freely own the *rite*, in its first application, did require the *consent* of all adult-persons who embrac'd the christian doctrine, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*. — But then, it does at the same time appear, that *whole households* were entitled to baptism, upon the *consent* of their heads. And it was in like manner with circumcision. *Abraham's consent* was previously requisite to his own or his family's receiving the *seal* of the covenant. — But that *consent* of his was sufficient to entitle all his infant-descendants in every after-generation, as the *consent* of the *first converts* to christianity entitles their infant-descendants in all after-generations to the same rite.

The applying it to christian's *infant-descendants*, is in perfect harmony with the application of the antient rite of initiation. And with the utmost propriety is baptism applied to the *infant posterity* of the christian converts; since the christian covenant has included with them, their *most distant* seed. — Nor only so, but if God is, in Christ, the *father of men*, the *rite of initiation* should be applied to the children of those who claim an interest in that paternal relation. Neither needs any christian suppose, that *the God and father of Jesus* will refuse to be the God and father of his infant-offspring since he signified to *Abraham*, as the *Lord God Almighty*, that he would be the God of his seed after him — and accordingly demanded the application of the *token* of that covenant. — *Besides*, there is nothing to be done on the part of a grown person in the administration of the *baptismal rite*, but he is wholly a patient under it. *No profession of his faith, or of his repentance*, is demanded in the administration of it, from the *commission*, *Matth. xxviii. 19.* nor from the account we have of the apostles applying

plying baptism. But baptism was applied, as a *separating rite*, to *distinguish* those adult persons and their households, who had already embraced the christian doctrine, from the *infidel* Jews and Gentiles.

It seems plainly to be a *rite of separation* applicable *first* to grown persons who embraced christianity and their households, and *afterwards* to all their infant-descendants: And, in its own nature, it seems to differ from the *eucharist*, as much as the *rite of circumcision* differed from the *passover*.

The *one* only marks out, as devoted to God in Jesus, all who profess the christian religion with their offspring; the *other*, requires adult-age to *commemorate* an event. *Do this in remembrance of me.*—Where the person does *himself*, and *for himself* celebrate the rite. But in the rite of baptism, he is only acknowledged as a member of christ's visible church. The *one* requires *faith, love and gratitude.*—The *other* does not demand any mental exercise of the patient—but is the declaration of the *baptizer*, that such a one is *owned* and separated as a member of christ's *visible* church.

If this was duly considered, I humbly apprehend the matter in debate would soon be ended. And surely nothing can be more plain and evident, than that the *supper* was substituted in the room and stead of the *passover*. Which was a rite that called persons to *look back* and *reflect* on the divine favour with gratitude and affection—and there is no more impropriety in the *baptismal rite's* taking the place of *circumcision*. The *one*, as well as the *other*, is properly *initial*; or only a *rite of separation* or *distinction*. And therefore, not so properly a person's *own act and deed*, but *another's for him*, or *upon him*, whether in *infancy* or at *adult-years*. Which distinction in the *two rites* is so material, that if so understood, must remove all difficulty about the application of baptism to infants.

Besides, the obligation of this positive rite is as well complied with, by one who was baptized in infancy, as by one baptized in adult age. For, an ingenuous mind, who can bless God that he was born of christian parents, will rejoice in his having been *early separated* to God by the initial rite, and will determine to abide by the dedication. He looks upon himself as having been under the *care* and *protection* of his Lord, who took him under his wing when he hung upon his mother's breasts. He owns the fitness of the dedication; and by the holiness of his heart and life, he *confirms* the dedication. Nor can he, will he *reproach* his parents for making the dedication *without his consent*. — He sees the reasonableness of it; — that a true *parental affection* was expressed in it. That the extensive dominion of Jesus required an acknowledged propriety in him; since to this end he both died, and rose, and received, *viz.* that he might be *Lord both of the dead and of the living*.

I would, in the next place, refer my reader to Mr. B's argument, *two discourses*, p. 42. where he opposes "the none but *grown persons* being receiv'd "as *visible members* of the christian church, in proof "of its *state of maturity* and *full growth*, to the *infant state* of the Jewish church, if the *circumcision* of infants made them members of it." For,

He is much offended, because in citing him, I have added the word *full* to *growth*. (b) He says, "I altered his words for the pleasure of making "an *invidious personal* reflection upon him — to "bring him into *contempt*, at the same time I pretend to speak in his commendation."

I own, that I have added the word *full*, and am persuaded that any impartial man will see that his reasoning will fairly admit of it. — His words are

(b) *Def. p. 47.*

these, " But it is an honour to the christian church,
 " a proof of its *state of maturity and full growth*,
 " that none but *grown persons*, making profession
 " of their *own faith*, and of their *own resolution* to
 " obey the mind of God, are received as *visible*
 " *members of it.*" (i)

Now, if none but *grown persons* making profession of their *own faith*, and of their *own resolution* to obey the mind of God, do prove the *state of maturity and full growth* of the christian church, how have I injured Mr. B? — The term *full* added to *growth*, is no way injurious; but perfectly agreeable to his representation. — And yet I am willing Mr. B. shall be his own interpreter; and by *grown persons*, let him mean, persons *not fully grown* — but then, how this proves the *full growth* of the christian church, from their being *visible members*, is not quite so conspicuous; neither does it so well shew the force of his argument. Farther,

My *alteration* is not unjust; for if a person of twelve or of fourteen years of age can but *make* profession of his *own faith*, and of his *own resolution* to obey the mind of God, he is, by Mr. B's own confession, *fully grown*, or in other words, he is a *proper subject* of baptism. For Mr. B. has intimated, " that he himself has baptized several persons
 " before they came to *full growth.*" (k) By which, no doubt, he means their *bodily growth*, at the same time he thought them at such a state of advancement in christian knowledge, as suits the *mature state*, the *full growth* of the christian church — otherwise his opposition to the *infant state* of the Jewish church, is but a lame opposition.

Mr. B. further says, " He is not sensible, that
 " the Jewish infants received any *spiritual* advantage, (which is what this author seems to mean
 " by *impartments* p. 38. l. 6.) by having the ordi-

(i) *Two Disc.* p. 46.

(k) *Def.* p. 47.

“ nance of circumcision administred to them;
 “ tho’ by the mark which it left in their flesh it
 “ gave occasion to enquire, when they grew up,
 “ what was the design of it, and might thereby
 “ afterwards prove the means of suggesting useful
 “ thoughts to their minds. And to me it is very
 “ clear, that no other infants, than those which
 “ lineally descended from *Abraham*, ever were
 “ *parties in the covenant made with him.*” (1)

What I have said in the place referr’d to, is this:
 “ We expect likewise to be shewn what *impartments*
 “ are made by baptism to a grown person, that an
 “ infant is not capable of receiving.” — This
 does not at all imply that I thought infants, in their
 baptism, do receive any *spiritual light or strength* —
 but stands directly opposed to the *antipaedobaptists*
 denying baptism to infants, as if some impartments
 attended it. And is supported by the drift of my
 argument. The sneer has nothing to support it;
 for I only assert, that as baptism does not *convey* or
impart any spiritual advantage either to adult per-
 sons or to infants, that therefore infants are as capa-
 ble subjects of baptism as grown persons. But as
 Mr. B. has well observed, “ that circumcision ad-
 “ ministred to infants might give them occasion to
 “ enquire, when they grew up, what was the de-
 “ sign of it, and might thereby afterwards prove
 “ the means of suggesting useful thoughts to their
 “ minds;” so the infants of christians when grown
 up, being assured that baptism had been applied to
 them, they would have as much occasion to en-
 quire what was the design of it; and so it will be-
 come the means of suggesting useful thoughts to
 their minds. And if this may be allowed to be a
spiritual advantage, I do allow that baptism is a
 proper means to this end. And Mr. B. should
 own it too.

(1) *Def.* p. 59.

But should Mr. B. pretend that the *mark in the flesh*, made by circumcision, had the *advantage* of baptism, in giving infants an *assurance* of their having had the *initiating seal* applied, which baptism does not do, as it leaves no mark in the flesh. — I would answer, that the *female Jews* had not this mark, and yet were assured of their being *parties* in the same covenant as well as the males. And not only so, but that *mark* could give the males no greater assurance of their being the *lineal descendants* of *Abraham*, than baptism does assure us that we are the *lineal descendants* of christians. — Their *book of the covenant*, their *sacred writings*, and the instructions of their *parents* and *guides*, were to inform them of the *original* of the appointment, and the *design* of the rite; and so the *New Testament*, our *parents friends*, &c. professing to *approve* and to have used the initial rite to their infant offspring, must be the *satisfactory ground* of childrens being persuaded that they have been thus dedicated. — Nor do I believe, that any *parents* or christian friends, have been ever under any temptation of deceiving children in this article. In most cases, there is either a *public* or a *private register* of such baptism.

But that no other infants, than those which *lineally descended from Abraham*, ever were *parties in the covenant made with him*, is not clear to me, tho' Mr. B. says that he is very clear in it.

It would seem strange, that the *profelytes* to the Jewish religion, should be admitted to the privileges of that constitution, and yet not be *parties* in the *Abrahamic covenant*, when they had embraced the *faith of Abraham*. To Jews and *Profelytes* was the effusion of the spirit made manifest at the *day of Pentecost*, [who had come from many distant countries, *Acts* ii. 10.] and this, before the apostles had any

any of them been sent to the Gentiles. And we find one of the *seven Deacons*, a PROSELYTE, even *Nicolas of Antioch*; who must have been circumcised, or the *Jews* would at this time have objected to him.

And many of these *proselytes* we are told, were at *Antioch*, ch. xiii. 43. such as had embraced the Jewish religion, [and who seem to have had the faith, or fidelity of *Abraham*,] who followed *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and were much better disposed than many of the *lineal descendants* of *Abraham*, see v. 45.

I cannot but think that these *proselytes* had been circumcised, and made parties in the covenant with *Abraham*; they seem to have had *circumcision*, the seal of the covenant by their worshipping with the *Jews*, and being admitted into offices with them in the christian church, in the very infancy of it; even before it appeared to the apostles that they were to go to the *Gentiles* or *Uncircumcised*.

It is not necessary that we suppose them to have intermarried with the tribes of *Israel*: Since without this, they might be parties in the covenant made with *Abraham*, as they enjoyed the *divine oracles*, and were favoured with a view of the *promises*, and also as under the more special protection of the Almighty, *he being their God*.—Nay, the pious *proselyte* would to greater advantage share the blessings of the *Abrahamic covenant* than the vicious, or impious *lineal descendants* of *Abraham*.—For *Abraham* was to be the father of all them that believed, even tho' they were not circumcised: and the father of the *circumcision*, more especially to such as walked in the steps of his faith, see *Rom.* iv. 11, 12.

To go on—Mr. B. is offended at my remarking upon this passage. “But if the very same ceremony had been admitted to our Lord *Jesus* without his own consent or knowledge, he could not have been said therein to have fulfilled all righteousness

“*ousness*, or to have done a *righteous action*, because
 “ then indeed he had performed no action at all,
 “ but had been entirely passive.” (m)

Upon which I have said, “ that I take this to
 “ be a *mere quibble*: For Mr. B. should to the pur-
 “ pose have shewn, that our Lord’s having been
 “ *circumcised* was not a *fulfilling of righteousness*, as
 “ well as his being *baptized*; and that the rite of
 “ *circumcision*, which was a *fulfilling of righteousness*,
 “ was performed with his consent and know-
 “ ledge.” (n)

I am still of opinion, that tho’ our Lord was a
patient in point of *circumcision*, yet the *circumcising*
 of him was a *fulfilling of the same kind of*
righteousness, with that fulfilled by his bap-
 tism, *viz.* a *positive and ritual* righteousness. And
 Mr. B. must himself allow it; since notwith-
 standing all he has said about positive institutions;
 he has expressly owned, “ That a disobedience to
 “ the divine command, respecting positive duties,
 “ is an immorality of a *different kind*, to the break-
 “ ing what we usually call a moral precept.” (o)—
 Now, if the *immorality* is of a *different kind*, surely
 the *righteousness* that there is in obeying the positive
 command, must also be of a *different kind*, to the
 righteousness that there is in obeying a moral pre-
 cept. It is therefore incumbent on Mr. B. to shew,
 what is the difference in the *kind of righteousness*
 fulfilled in baptism, and the *kind of righteousness*
 fulfilled in *circumcision*: And how these *two diffe-*
rent kinds of righteousness, differ from that *kind* which
 there is in obeying a moral precept.

But what if our Lord *did no action at all*, in the
 affair of his being *circumcised*, will it from thence
 follow, that righteousness was *not fulfilled* because
 he was entirely passive? which is Mr. B’s argu-

(m) *Two Disc.* p. 13.

(n) *Append.* p. 41.

(o) *Two Disc.* p. 19.

ment. — Then I conclude, that righteousness was *not fulfilled* when he was *baptized*. In the application of baptism, the *act and deed was not his own*, but *another's for him*. Yet, Mr. B. will have it, “ that whatever righteousness there is in obeying “ the will of God, must be founded in our own “ *act and deed, and not another's for us.*” (p)

The *righteousness* fulfilled in baptism, I understand to be something *very distinct* from *moral* righteousness; and therefore conclude, that *consent* is not necessary in every subject, as it is in *all kinds of moral* righteousness.

And truly Mr. B. has all along reasoned upon the supposition of positive institutions being founded *merely* on the divine command. So that I see not with what face he can object to *righteousness being fulfilled* by the *rite's* being applied to a *mere patient*.

— Nor is it any objection that our Lord *consented*; for *John* came not baptizing till *Jesus* was of adult age; and therefore his *consent* was a thing requisite to the administration of the *baptismal rite*. It does not therefore follow, that *righteousness is not fulfilled*, where the subject of baptism is not at the age of consent. — It is certain, that in the *affair of circumcision* it was so fulfilled: For hence, the apostle *Paul*, as a *Jew*, reckoned so much upon his *having been circumcised on the eighth day*, Gal. iii. 5.

And we have an instance of baptism applied, where the grown persons baptized, do seem to have been *mere patients* in the application of the rite, *Acts* x. 47, 48. *Peter* does not ask them *their consent*, but enquires of his company, whether they had any objection to these *Gentiles* being baptized? and then he commanded that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord.

That *consent*, in the subject of baptism, is not essential to the *fulfilling of the righteousness* here spoken

of, is evident, from its being a righteousness of a *different kind* from what is *moral*, where *consent* is the very spirit of that righteousness. For tho' grown persons, at the *age of consent*, who had been just converted to christianity, should be willing to undergo the rite, or should not make resistance, yet in the very nature of it, it was more properly the incumbent duty of the first ministers of christianity to see that the rite was applied to them. For it is a *marking-out* or *separating* of persons.

The *consent* therefore of the persons *separating* must ever be essential, tho' not of the persons *separated*. As was the case of *circumcision* to all the infant descendants of *Abraham*, and is the case of *baptism* among all the infant descendants of christians. — And which seems to account for that *difference* which there is in that righteousness fulfilled by baptism, and that righteousness which is of eternal, immutable and moral obligation.

Besides, as *baptism* is only a *seal* or *token* of an *advantageous covenant*, it is not requisite that parents should wait the *age of consent*, before they apply it to their children; for all the laws of nature, or of reason will justify them in applying the *seal*, without their understanding the *design* of it.

And as the baptism of water is intended to *separate* from the infidel world, *all* that are put under the benefit of the gospel scheme; it thus fulfils all *that righteousness* which is to be found in this institution.

But *farther*, tho' it must be owned, that neither the *consent* of an infant circumcised, nor of an infant baptized can be had at the time of applying the rites, and so cannot belong to the *righteousness* fulfilled by the one rite or the other; yet the *approbation* of the subject may afterwards be obtained. — Nay, it is *more probable* that a person baptized in

Infancy will approve of his parents *act and deed*, than that a person not baptized at all, should think himself obliged to atone for his parents neglect; witness the great number of the children of *Anabaptists*, who live and die *unbaptized*, tho' arrived at years of discretion — will it not hence follow, that *more righteousness* is fulfilled by *baptizers of infants*, than is fulfilled by their *opponents*?

I might add, the *verb* render'd *suffer*, which expresses the pleading of our Lord with *John*, and also *John's compliance*, is the very same word made use of to express our Lord's concern about young children being brought to him, *SUFFER little children*, &c. *Matth. xix. 14.* compare *Mark x. 14.* *Luke xviii. 16.* If therefore *infants* are baptized in the name of Jesus, and so initiated into his kingdom, this is a *fulfilling of righteousness*, tho' they are not at the age of consent; since *whatever righteousness there is fulfilled* in the application of the rite, is founded in the *act and deed*. More especially, as the baptizing them does appear to be very conformable to the mind and will of Jesus, who would have *infants brought to him*, and reproves those disciples who presume to *forbid* them.

Righteousness had been thus *fulfilled* upon the person of our Lord, even where *knowledge* and *consent* did not appear, as in his *circumcision*; and was afterwards fulfilled upon him, in like manner, at his *burial*, in which there was an accomplishment of a prophecy, which related to his making with the rich his grave, see *Isa. liii. 9.* and Dr. Sykes's *Connection*, &c. p. 163.

Yet Mr. B. says, “ my quibble lies in putting
 “ *infant circumcision* and *adult baptism* upon the same
 “ foot of *fulfilling righteousness*, without making
 “ the necessary distinction between the subjects of
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“ the two ordinances: which distinction entirely
 “ changes the case with regard to the persons by
 “ whom the righteousness is fulfilled.” (q)

Mr. B. seems to think, that because our *Lord* was baptized at *adult-age*, and the *first christian converts* were so, that therefore it is unfair to suppose that the *righteousness* fulfilled in baptizing infants can be of the *same* kind with the *righteousness* fulfilled by infant circumcision: And charges me with quibbling for making the supposition.

But Mr. B. has owned that the righteousness fulfilled by baptism upon adult persons, is a *different* kind of righteousness to that fulfilled by obeying what we usually call a *moral* precept. And if *different*, perhaps there may be no quibbling in my putting the righteousness fulfilled by infant-circumcision upon the *same* foot with the righteousness fulfilled by adult-baptism. — For Mr. B. has all along reasoned upon the supposition of positive institutions being founded *merely* on the divine command: And of consequence, the righteousness fulfilled by baptism must be the *same* kind of righteousness with that fulfilled by circumcision; *baptism* and *circumcision* being alike positive institutions. Nor does it alter the nature of one or of the other, *viz.* that *Abraham* had the command to be circumcised when he was of *adult* age, and many of his family; or that our *Lord* and the first converts to his religion, were of *adult* age when the command for baptism was given, tho’ the infant-descendants of *Abraham* and of the *first christians*, were to be *equally* subject to the same positive rites with their adult parents.

It will therefore be no less than quibbling for a man to assert that *infant circumcision*, being the *same* rite applied to *Abraham* and his adult family, is not upon the *same* foot of fulfilling righteousness: Unless it can be shewn wherein the difference really

(q) *Def.* p. 67.

lies.

lies. Infant-circumcision succeeded adult-circumcision, and both, in my humble opinion, fulfilled the *same kind* of righteousness; and therefore I should conclude, that it may very safely be put upon the *same foot* with that of *baptism*, whether applied to *adult persons* or to *infants*.

Surely then, it must only be an *imaginary distinction*, that entirely changes the case, with regard to the persons by whom the righteousness is fulfilled.



S E C T. II.

Upon our Lord's going from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John.

TH E better to enforce the practice of adult-baptizing, Mr. B. has laid *great stress* upon *our Lord's going from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John*, see his *two discourses*, p. 2, 3, 14, 15, 16, 17. and his *defence*, p. 20, 21, 22.

In which he has asserted, “ that our Lord underwent the fatigue of a journey on purpose to
“ do the *greater honour* to a divine institution —
“ and that otherwise he would not have travelled
“ from *Galilee* to *Jordan* to be baptized of *John*,
“ when it might easily have been so ordered, that
“ *John* should have come to him.”

My remarks do greatly offend; (r) to which I refer my reader. — I yet think Mr. B. raises the positive institution so very high, that no part of

(r) *Append.* p. 12, 13.

the *example* of *Jesus*, respecting *moral obligation*, can have greater force. And all this, from no other authority than this *short, plain, historical narrative*, viz. *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him*, Matth. iii. 13.

Mr. B. says, “ if his account of the matter is “ wrong, let this gentleman inform us, what “ was the principle upon which the journey was “ undertaken, what was the design of *Christ’s* “ coming to *John*, when he was at so great a distance, “ as from *Galilee to Jordan*? Why he did not stay “ till *John* came to him?” (s).

I am very ready to give the best account I can of it; without *adding to*, or *diminishing from* the history; or *injuring* the importance of it.

And according to St. *Matthew*, the fact, as I apprehend it, lies thus; ——— ‘ *Jesus* had had his ‘ usual residence at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, till the time ‘ he was to put on a *publick character*. *John* went ‘ out sometime before his doing so, to *prepare* men ‘ to receive the *expected Messiah*. He did this, by ‘ *baptizing* men with the *baptism of repentance*, there- ‘ by signifying the *near approach* of a *new dispensa-* ‘ *tion*, or *kingdom*; and the people were greatly ‘ alarmed by it: infomuch that the *historian* says, ‘ that *all of Jerusalem* and of *Judea*, and of *all the* ‘ *country* about came, and were baptized of him. ‘ It was therefore most *natural* and *easy* for our Lord ‘ to follow his *Harbinger* to the place where he had ‘ been *preparing the way*. And as *Jesus* was to re- ‘ ceive a testimony of his being the *Messiah*; it would ‘ with much more propriety be given at the place ‘ of *publick baptism*, than at *Nazareth*; where our ‘ Lord had only sustained a *private character*; and ‘ where the *prejudices* of the people run so strong ‘ against him, that he had reason to reproach them

(s) *Def. p. 22.*

by

‘ by saying, *a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country.*’

This, I humbly imagine, does sufficiently account for the journey which our Lord made, in order to be baptized of *John*, without giving the history a *mystical* or *superstitious* turn. The *circumstances* do in themselves appear to have directed to such conduct. Nor does it seem, *that to have had it ordered otherwise*, could have been done with so much propriety.

Although, I freely own, that if our Lord had never took any journeys but this *one* to his baptism, a *peculiar emphasis* might have been laid upon it; especially by such, who thought it would afford some recommendation of their religious practice. But when I consider the *whole* of our Lord’s ministrations as attended with great labour and travail, journeyings and fatigues, I cannot be inclined to *point the emphasis* as Mr. B. has done on this journey.



S E C T. III.

Upon proselyte-baptism.

I WOULD next take some notice of Mr. B’s remarks about *proselyte-baptism*, from p. 36. to p. 43. of his *defence*.

In p. 39. he says, “ Let him prove that God ever required them, [*i. e.* the *Jews*] to baptize their proselytes.”

In answer, I think it is very proveable they were to do it, [if they had not had any express command for it,] from the very nature of the *Jew-*

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ish purifications ; and which any man may see, who attends carefully to the *Jewish* statutes and injunctions, as they lie in the *Mosaic Code*. For a purification by water was to be applied to a *Jew*, a *native Jew* when *legally defiled*, whether *male* or *female* ; even the *water of separation*, or of *sprinkling* : No re-admission to the unclean person without it, tho' the *separation* was occasioned only by the touch of a dead body. And as *Gentile converts* were esteemed, by their constitution, to be *naturally impure*, *unholy* or *defiled*, nothing can be a more rational conclusion, than that they and their families should be admitted into the *Jewish* polity, by *baptism*, or by the *water of sprinkling*. Neither does that passage quoted by *Ainsworth* from *Maimonides*, at all oppose this—which Mr. B. says, I prudently omitted, (t) viz. “ That a stranger who is circumcised and not “ baptized, or baptized and not circumcised, is “ not a proselyte till he be both circumcised and “ baptized.” — But it agrees with the statute, *Numb. xv. 15. that one law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.* For altho' God's law did not require *baptism* as the rite of initiation to a *native Jew*, but *circumcision* was the *initial* rite into the *Abrahamic* covenant ; yet according to the *Jewish* constitution the unclean *Jews* were to be purified by water : And therefore the *Gentile* convert, if a *male*, must be both *circumcised* and *baptized* in order to his admission. And in being so, it does appear that the stranger was subject to *one law*, and *one manner* with the *native Jew*. (u)

Besides, the supposing of *proselyte-baptism* does most naturally and easily account for *John's* coming and baptizing with water, as it had been the *anti-*ent custom of the priests to purify and cleanse, by

(t) *Def.* p. 40.
Challenge, from p. 18. to 23.

(u) See this more at large, in the

sprinkling of running-water upon the unclean: And thus, most probably, initiating the proselyte into a new religion, or constitution.

This seems to be hinted to us by our Lord, when he declares to *John*, that thus it became them to *fulfill all righteousness, i. e.* every important, every significative positive rite that God hath instituted. For *πληρωσαι*, says a learned writer, is to comply with, or act according to a law or custom. (w) So that the very phrase of *fulfilling* all righteousness, or complying with a law or custom, will intimate, that it was no strange thing among the Jews, to have the rite of water-baptism applied to proper subjects.

Mr. B. seems not pleased with my “ referring to “ the Rabbinical or Talmudical writings, as I find “ their character from the hands of some considerable authors.” (x)

Whereas, all I contend for, is, their being likely to have retained such customs about *profelyting*, without any temptation to have corrupted the antient traditions; and may serve to illustrate *John's baptism*, as well as be useful for the explaining those other parts of gospel history, which Mr. B. does allow. (y)

Mr. B. says, “ that I have prudently passed “ over in silence, what is of the greatest importance “ in the controversy, relating to their practice, “ [*i. e.* the adult baptizer's practice] as christians.” And he cites a large passage from his *two discourses*, p. 48, 49. “ that if there had been any such practice among the Jews [as baptizing of proselytes] “ and our Lord had designed an analogy between “ their baptism, and that which he himself ordained, we can by no means believe, but that “ he would have told us how far the analogy “ should reach. In short; if baptism be an institution of Christ, and is to be practised in obe-

(w) Dr. D. Scott's notes on the place.

(x) Def. p. 41.

(y) Ibid.

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“ dience to his command : Then it must receive
 “ its full force from him ; and must be understood,
 “ as to its subject, as to its manner of administra-
 “ tion, and as to its continuance, according to
 “ those accounts, and those only, which himself
 “ and his immediate followers, commissioned by
 “ him, do give of it. Nor is there the least
 “ ground for supposing, that Christ would leave
 “ any ordinance of his own, relating to his own
 “ disciples, to be explained and applied according
 “ to a practice of men, who in that very practice
 “ had themselves no divine command to support
 “ them. (z) And he says that neither *Josephus* nor
 “ *Philo* make any mention of such baptism.” (a)

Please to observe, Mr. B. has rested the *weight*
of the argument here. This contains *what is of the*
greatest importance in the controversy relating to their
practice. And is, what he says, *I had prudently passed*
over in silence.

This, I think, I had not done. However to
 do him justice, I will give this *important passage* a
 more distinct consideration.

I have attempted to support the opinion of *prose-*
lyte-baptism among the Jews, from several authori-
 ties. Such as *Ainsworth*, *Lightfoot*, *Prideaux*, *God-*
win, &c. who are allowed to have well understood
 the *Rabbinical* and *Talmudical* writings. And tho’
 Mr. B. talks “ of the *miserable shifts* that learned
 “ men are put to, for producing the least *item* of
 “ an imaginary reference ;” (b) yet he has not
 shewn that these authors have mistook in those their
 citations, of which I have made some use.— Neither
 have I rested the argument upon those authorities
 from *Talmudical* writings ; but have shewn, from the
 very nature of the *Mosaic ordinances*, that the hea-
 then convert must undergo a *purification by water*.
 Which may satisfy us, tho’ neither *Josephus*, nor

(z) *Def.* p. 42, 43.

(a) p. 42.
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(b) *Ibid.*
Philo,

Philo, nor any *Talmudist* had taken notice of it. — Nor is the *silence of Josephus* of any weight, since he was an *artful, cautious* historian, when he had to do with *facts* that would give any advantage to the christians; as the learned *Mr. Lardner* has shewn. (c) *He would not so much as mention the affair of the Bethlehem massacre of the infants.* His character is not the best, “for tho’ he was a very *firm Jew*, yet he “could point his ridicule at the *Pharisees* when giving account of a *scene of cruelty* exercised upon “them, and of the heavy sufferings which they “were under.” (d)

And might we not expect that such a man would conceal any usage, among the *Jews*, that would give advantage to the christian? As that would have done, *viz. their baptizing their proselytes* with a *baptism of repentance*, or with a baptism expressive of their renouncing their *Gentilism*; which would exactly correspond with *John’s* administering the *baptism of repentance* to *Jews*, who were by that admitted or enter’d into a *new Constitution*, into a *nobler Polity*, into the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And as to *Philo*, the *Alexandrian Jew*, I imagine little better could be expected from him. — Moreover, the use of *baptismal-water* was of *divine appointment* among the *Jews*; and therefore our Lord did not leave an ordinance of his own, to be explained and applied by a practice of men, that had no divine command to support it.

But farther, it does not appear that *water-baptism* had its *origine* in the institution of *Jesus*, which *Mr. B.* takes for granted: And therefore, when he says, “*In short*, if baptism be an institution of Christ, “and is to be practised in obedience to his command, then it must receive its full force from “him.” There is nothing in the *conclusion*: For it does not appear that *water-baptism* ow’d its rise to an

(c) See his *Credibility*, Vol. I. p. 441, 442.

(d) *Ibid.* p. 373.

institution of *Jesus*. On the other hand, it was what he himself submitted to, in order to fulfil all righteousness, or to comply with a law or custom that was of divine institution. And this his baptism was *previous* to his taking upon him a public character, or to his asserting any authority, as a LAW-GIVER, in the church or kingdom of God.

Our Lord did, it is true, after his resurrection, command his disciples to baptize into a more enlarged view of the *divine manifestations*; to wit, into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;—but he neither gave any new direction about the subjects of baptism, nor about the manner of its administration: He did therefore manifestly adopt an ordinance that was not of his own instituting, which was to be used by his own disciples, and with no other explication of the *modus* of it than the practice of *John*, and the ancient usage of it among the Jews.—The difference of the doctrine of *John's baptism* and that of the *Apostles*, was, *John* came baptizing men into the coming, approaching kingdom of the Messiah.—The *Apostles* were to administer the baptismal rite, as signifying mens being admitted into a kingdom already come, wherein the Father displays himself thro' the mediation of his exalted Son, and by the influences of his spirit.—This appears to have been the true state of the case; and if so, Mr. B.'s reasonings, upon which he has laid the utmost stress, have no weight in them.

To proceed: Mr. B. once thought he had found out something from John i. 25. *Why baptizest thou, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet?* The purport of which question, he says, seems to be, “*What authority hast thou to bring up a new religious ceremony?*” (e)

To which I have replied, “That they plainly had some notion of the rite, as sacred, and thought

(e) *Two Disc.* p. 46.

“ it fit to be used as the *initiatory ceremonial* into the “ kingdom of the Messiah.” (f)

And it does seem plain, from the gospel-history of *John's* baptism, and the manner in which the people treated it, that it was no *new* thing. They only enquire about his *authority*; for they manifestly saw, that it would *suit well* with that *anointed* person, whom *Isaiab* had foretold should *proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord*, *Isa. lxi. beg.* and therefore they flocked in to *John's* baptism.— And, perhaps, the *anointed* person there mentioned may be the ground of that first interrogation, *If thou art not THAT CHRIST?*— The next is, *Nor ELIAS?*— whom *Malachi* had prophesied of by name, *That the Lord would send to PURIFY the Sons of Levi, and PURGE them, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness*, *ch. iv. 5.* compared with *ch. iii.* the beginning.— The next character is, *Neither THAT PROPHET.*— Perhaps *that Prophet*, of whom *Moses* has foretold, *That the Lord our God will raise up like unto him*, *Deut. xviii. 15.*— If thou art none of these, *why dost thou baptize with the baptism of repentance?* Who can help thinking, that they must know that the *rite* was suitable to introduce into a *new* constitution, as it had been used to the *profelytes of righteousness?* They saw plainly, that *John*, by his baptism, called them to the expectation of a *new* state of things; and therefore their concern is to know whether he was the *true harbinger* anointed for that purpose.— But we never find any question put about the *signification* or *intention* of the rite; consequently, it is highly probable that they had been well acquainted with the use of it.— For my own part, I think it *certain*, that *profelyte-baptism* must have been in use among them; tho' I allow, it may be with others matter of *doubt* and *great uncertainty*.

Upon the whole, there seems to have been the utmost propriety in *John's* using *water* to initiate into the kingdom of *Jesus*, or to prepare men for it, as *water* had been the appointed, sacred mean of purifying from legal and ceremonial uncleannesses under the Jewish Theocracy; and as it is the natural mean of all external, bodily purifications among all men. — It is not, therefore, a rite enjoined by mere authority, or arbitrary will, but has a greater suitableness in it than any other mean of purification; and nothing can equal it, as an easy, natural, purifying symbol.

And hence, very pertinently, does the prophet *Isaiah* speak of the *Messiah*, as he that should sprinkle many nations, ch. lii. 15. And *Ezekiel* describes a most happy event, by God's sprinkling clean water upon them, in order to their being clean, ch. xxxvi. 25.



S E C T. IV.

Upon infants being esteemed the subjects of baptism.— On Dr. Gale's excluding them from the ALL, Matt. 28, 19.— and upon circumcision being a seal.

MR. B. says, “ That if the principles, upon
 “ which he builds in his *Second Discourse*,
 “ are true, then it is fairly concluded,
 “ that it was the mind of *Christ*, that all those, in
 “ every age of the church, who are convinced of
 “ the truth and divine authority of his doctrine,
 “ should,

“ should, by baptism, take on themselves the pro-
 “ fession of it. And not only so, but it will like-
 “ wise follow, that it was not the mind of *Christ*,
 “ that any others should be baptized than those who
 “ make a *personal profession* of faith in him ; such a
 “ faith as includes repentance for sin, and hope in
 “ the mercy of God thro’ him. If it be true,
 “ that baptism has, throughout the New Testament,
 “ excepting only the single case of our Lord him-
 “ self, a view to repentance and turning from sin ;
 “ if it appears, that the *ordinance itself* was designed
 “ to exhibit the hope of pardon ; and if the baptism
 “ instituted by *Christ*, after his resurrection, does,
 “ in every baptized person, denote and take for
 “ granted an actual profession of such a faith in
 “ *Christ* as includes repentance for sin, and hope of
 “ pardon thro’ him ; then it could not be the mind
 “ of *Christ*, that any other should be baptized, than
 “ those who make such profession.” (g)

If Mr. B.’s principles or premises are true, every
 just conclusion that he draws from them will be true
 also. — But all he has said, or can ever be able to
 say, will not be sufficient to prove, *that it was, the*
mind of Christ, that no others should be baptized, but such
only as make a personal profession of faith in him. And
 it is all along begging the question, which these
 gentlemen eternally do, *viz.* to lay down this as a prin-
 ciple, “ That because all nations were to be taught
 “ before they were baptized, therefore the children
 “ of the converts of all nations must *first* be edu-
 “ cated in the *christian* doctrine, before they have the
 “ *initiating rite* applied.” Which we deny they
 have any, the least, authority for.

The description he here gives of *baptism*, would
 much better suit the *memorial rite*, as by that rite
 men properly make a *personal profession of their faith*
in Jesus ; of such a faith as includes repentance for sin,

(g) *Def.* p. 23, 24.

and

and hope in the mercy of God thro' him. But baptism, I apprehend, can only be a rite *initial* into a constitution of grace and pardon; not a rite that demands the *mature* state or growth of the baptized, but merely the *adult's* embracing the *Christian* doctrine; on the doing of which, not only *he*, but his *whole family*, is intitled to the rite.

Mr. B. has made *Jesus* the *only single exception* to baptism's exhibiting the *hope of pardon*, or its expressing a *view to repentance*. An exception, I humbly imagine, of great weight in the argument; forasmuch as no *example* can be of more authority to shew, *that baptism may be applied to subjects, who have no sins to repent of*.—Even to *infants*, to whose *purity and innocency*, *Christ* has likened his own kingdom; and expressly has said, that it consists of persons, who have the *humility and inoffensiveness* of *little children*.

I add, our blessed Lord seems to have been initiated by baptism into his public ministry, not only that *John* might have an opportunity of observing the divine testimony given to his character, but that he himself might have the Spirit *poured out* upon him. For, before his baptism with water, it does not appear, that he had that *presence or effusion of the Spirit*, as he had after his baptism. Now if the *Christian's* Lord had not his *divine capacity* for his public office, till after his baptism, why may not infants be baptized, in order to their more gradually being made capable of the benefits and privileges of God's Kingdom under *Jesus*?

Mr. B. is truly so complaisant as to say, “ That
 “ infants are still *the care of heaven*; as much the care
 “ of heaven now, as they were in former ages;
 “ [but] yet the wisdom of God was sufficient to
 “ judge whether they should or should not, by baptism, be made *visible members of the Christian church*,
 “ that there was no need of *forbidding this rite to*
 “ *them*, it being sufficient reason for us to *forbear*
 K “ admini-

“ administering it to them, that *Christ*, the author of
 “ our religion, did not appoint it to them ; but on the
 “ contrary gave such an account of the ordinance,
 “ as shew’d he did not think them the fit subjects
 “ of it.” (b)

It seems somewhat strange, that infants should be
 as much the care of heaven now, if *denied* an admis-
 sion into God’s kingdom under *Jesus* ; since under
 former dispensations, they were actually appointed
 of God to be initiated into his church or kingdom.
 — One would justly wonder that it should ever enter
 into the heart of man to imagine, from the gos-
 pel-history, that the *tender* and *compassionate* *Je-
 sus*, who shew’d such *particular* and *express* affection
 to infants, as to *take them up in his arms, and bless*
them, should exclude them a privilege which they had
 all along enjoy’d. He has not *forbid* their being
 brought to him, but reprov’d the *forbidding* them
 in his disciples. And if the *baptismal rite* is the ex-
 ternal signification of *adult persons coming to Jesus*,
 or embracing of his religion, the same rite seems
 most naturally applied to their *bringing their infants*
 to him. And the *nature of the rite* does no way
 forbid their being the subjects of it ; since the *right-
 eousness fulfilled*, in the language of Mr. B. is founded
 in the *act and deed*, which is done as well for them as
 for grown persons.

Yet Mr. B. says, “ That our Lord gave such
 “ an account of the ordinance, as shew’d he did not
 “ think them fit subjects of it ; and that instead of
 “ any probability that it was administered to them
 “ by *John*, and the disciples of *Jesus*, it plainly ap-
 “ pears to us that it was not.” (i)

I should be glad to know *where our Lord has given*
any such account of the ordinance, as shew’d he did not
think infants the fit subjects of it. — Was this account
 from his being baptized himself, who had no sins to

(b) Def. p. 65.

(i) Def. p. 65.

repent

repent of? and who gave us no account of what *faith* he made profession of at his baptism; but only tells *John*, that he *ought* to baptize him, as by doing so, *righteousness would be fulfilled*.— Or does it appear, that *John* did not baptize *infants* along with their parents? The origine of *water-baptism* will lead one to suppose that he did; and will best account for the *silence* about children. Our Lord's own personal conduct to *infants* will *confirm* the supposition; and the conduct of the Apostles, in baptizing *whole households*, upon the *heads* of them embracing the Christian doctrine, renders it *highly probable*, if not *certain*, that infants were included in the commission given them to baptize *all nations*.

I know Dr. GALE insists much upon *teaching*, in the *general commission*, as standing related to the *all* who were to be baptized; and therefore will not allow *infants* to be any of those parts of the *all nations* that are to be baptized. (*k*)

But tho' we own that the *gospel*, wherever published, does demand the *credit* of adult persons *before* they are baptized, as well as the *faith* of *Abraham* was *pre-requisite* to God's entering into covenant with him, or the *Israelites* acknowledging *Moses* to be the Saviour whom God had raised up for them, before he could actually become so, in leading them out of *Egyptian-bondage*, and conducting them to *Canaan*; yet, their *infants*, in both cases, were *included* in the same covenant, and circumcised along with *Abraham*; as well as baptized *along with* their parents unto *Moses*, in the cloud and in the *sea*. And why? I answer, because God knew that *Abraham* would *teach* his household, and his children after him, to serve the Lord. — This was a moral reason, or shewed the *fitness* of their being taken into covenant with him, or of God's being the God of *Abraham*, and of *his seed*. — And the obligation of the *Mosaic*

(*k*) See his *Reflections* &c. p. 256. and onward.

covenant, was, that they should teach their statutes and judgments to their sons, and to their sons sons, Deut. iv. 8, 9. Yea, that they should teach them DILIGENTLY unto their children, vi. 7. Conformable to which, the Christian baptism stands properly related to teaching, as the baptized-adult are first taught, and by the baptism of their infants do stand obliged to teach them the design and intention of the Christian doctrine. And thus, I am persuaded, the Apostles answered the end of their mission, in baptizing all who embraced the Christian doctrine, and laying them under the obligation of bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, by applying that token or seal of the covenant unto their households.

And it is but trifling to say, that if infants are thus included in the all nations that are baptized, then it would follow, that “all unbelievers and profane blasphemers, all atheists, and the vilest debauchees, together with mere naturals and raving madmen, &c. that these are all parts of the nations as truly as infants.” (1)

For this I deny; and in the words of a judicious friend, must declare, “That they are but as wens, or as excrescences in the human body. They are no natural parts, but, if you will, they are unnatural parts, or deformities.”—Whereas infants are the natural, proper parts of nations. We deny, as well as they, the baptizing of adult infidels; tho’ we think, that all those who belong to the believing parts of nations ought to be included under the same seal, as parts of Christ’s visible church, thus separated and devoted to God under Jesus, in like manner as the children of Abraham were included, devoted, and separated with their father; and as the children of the Israelites were, with their parents, baptized unto Moses.

(1) Dr. Gale’s Reflex. p. 256.

So that all that Mr. B. has said in his *defence*, about the *households* having *no children* in them, and of the *interests of children* under *former dispensations*, has no manner of weight with me. I refer my reader to his *Defence*, from p. 54. to p. 60. — He thinks it a “*mere presumption* to take for granted that there “were infants in the *baptized households* ;” and I apprehend it to be a *much more groundless presumption*, to take for granted that there were none.

Mr. B. tells me, “That I should do well to consider, that circumcision is never, throughout the “whole Scripture, said to be a *seal* to any other “person in the world than to *Abraham* himself. “*Rom. iv. 11.* — Tho’ it is called a *token*, *Gen. xvii. “10, 11.*” (m)

What advantage he would gain by this, I know not ; for in the very place he cites, it is expressly called *God’s covenant*, which *Abraham* should keep between God and him, and his *seed* after him ; *his covenant*, as every man-child among them, of *Abraham’s* house, should be circumcised. And *circumcision* was to be the *token* of the covenant, as at *eight days* old every man-child was to be circumcised, comp. *ver. 12.* And his covenant was to be in their flesh, for an *everlasting covenant*.

Mr. B. indeed says, “This it visibly was, [i.e. a “*token.*] But there is a vast difference between saying “this, and affirming what the Scripture no where “does affirm, that circumcision was to infants the “*seal of the covenant.*” (n)

Is this reasoning ? — Pray let Mr. B. shew, that the *Apostle* was warranted from the history of circumcision, to call it a *seal* of the covenant to *Abraham*, from any other view of it, than as it was a *token* of that covenant which God made with *him and his posterity* ? — But if *St. Paul* has called CIRCUMCISION, a SEAL to *Abraham*, tho’ the history only

(m) *Def.* p. 46.

(n) *Ibid.*

calls

calls it a *token* to him, and to his seed after him, I humbly imagine my *authority* in using the word *Seal* was as good as *St. Paul's* could make it. — And if *Mr. B.* takes offence at the word *Seal*, applied to circumcision, tho' circumcision was a *token* to *Abraham's seed* equally with *Abraham* himself, of the same covenant, — and when it was never intended to differ as a *token* in *Abraham's flesh*, from what it was to be in the flesh of his descendants. — If, I say, this offends, let *Mr. B.* endeavour to remove the offence. I am clear of the scandal, which must fall either upon *Mr. B.* or upon *St. Paul*; and the insinuation of my using *too much freedom* with Scripture, or *affirming what it no where does affirm*, returns with its proper force.

Yet *Mr. B.* thinks, “ That I do not act very advisedly in laying so much stress upon the thought
“ that infants received the *seal of the covenant* under
“ the dispensation of *Moses*; forasmuch as if I pursue this thought into all its consequences, it will
“ prove that the *females*, who were excluded from
“ receiving the *seal*, were excluded from the covenant itself; and then what will become of my
“ argument, from circumcision under the Law, to
“ the baptizing of infants, of both sexes, under
“ the Gospel.” (o)

This, I have already shewn, has nothing formidable in it, in my *Plea for Infants*, p. 45. and onward.

But nevertheless, I shall remark, that tho' circumcision was the *seal* of the *Abrahamic* covenant, and only applicable to the males, it does not thence follow that the *females* were excluded from the covenant: But, on the contrary, the *seal* was itself a token to the *females*, inasmuch as they were confined and limited in their *cohabitations* by it; and so it served to keep a *distinct seed* or *family* till the *promised male-seed* should be born. To this end, their

(o) *Def.* p. 46.

inter-marriages with other nations was made a *capital crime*. See *Josb.* xxiii. 12, 13. and compare *Deut.* vii. 3.

I mention this, to shew, that the *females* were included in the covenant, tho' they had not the *seal* in their flesh. It answered to the purpose of keeping a distinct *family* or *seed*, which was strictly guarded by the most severe laws. So that every daughter, who possessed an inheritance in any tribe of the children of *Israel*, was indispensibly obliged to be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of *Israel* might enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. See *Numb.* xxxvi. 8.

The importance of this, the *sacred historians* saw; two of the *Evangelists* have accordingly given the *genealogy* of our Lord, one of his mother, and the other of his supposed father. — This may suffice to point out the *extensive* view of the rite of circumcision, and shew, that tho' the *females* had not the token in their flesh, yet they were manifestly included in the self-same covenant which it sealed.

And very consistently with this, *baptism* appears to have succeeded in the *room* and *place* of circumcision; else why does the Apostle express himself as he does, *Gal.* iii. 28. *Col.* iii. 11. Neither *male* nor *female*, neither *circumcision* nor *uncircumcision*, but all are one in *Christ Jesus*? — What can this mean, unless he refers to *baptism*, as removing that distinction in the *application* of the rite which circumcision had made; which must intimate, that it has the *place*, and succeeds circumcision to advantage, or the Apostle's argument is unintelligible. — I cannot tell what made the difference between *male* and *female* under the *Abrahamic* covenant, if *circumcision*, to which the Apostle refers, did not. But *baptism* is that rite alone which can be opposed under the *Christian* covenant, as removing that difference. Now, if circumcision alone did constitute that difference,

rence, which baptism alone does remove, then baptism must *succeed* to circumcision, and be considered as supplying, to more friendly purposes, the *room* and *place* of circumcision. — *Moreover*, he spoke this of persons who had actually received *baptism*. — See *Gal. iii. 27.* — There was no difference of *male* and *female* among baptized *Christians*, as baptism had been equally applied to both. If this be not the design of *St. Paul's* reasoning, let *Mr. B.* shew what is.

Mr. B. thinks I have done injury to his argument, p. 59. of his *Two Discourses*, by adding those words, *Yet the Apostle makes no mention of any being baptized.* (p)

He had said, “ That the argument taken from
“ the *silence of Scripture* concerning the baptizing of
“ the posterity of *Christian* parents, does indeed
“ make for the baptizing of them, instead of mak-
“ ing against it.” — And afterwards — “ it deserves
“ to be remarked, that even in the Epistles them-
“ selves, tho’ written at a time when many of the
“ first converts, in the churches to which they were
“ directed, must have had children *grown up* to
“ years of understanding; yet the Apostles speak
“ of baptism as an ordinance to be observed, and
“ not to be laid aside.”

In citing this last passage, instead of saying, *Yet the Apostles speak of baptism as an ordinance to be observed, and not to be laid aside*, I have put, *Yet the Apostles make no mention of any being baptized.* (q)

The thing is true *in fact*, and supported by what he had said before, *viz.* the *silence of Scripture* concerning the baptizing of their children, when grown up to years of understanding. — *Besides*, I made no use of this alteration to undermine or weaken his argument for the continuation of baptism: So that since his *premises* support the *conclusion* I drew from them, all the offence only lies in putting the alteration *under the cover of the same marks with his own words.*

(p) *Def.* p. 53.

(q) *Append.* p. 30.

For

For, the conclusion which I drew, I yet think *just*, and defy him to prove that the *Apostles* speak of baptism as an ordinance to be observed, and only applicable to their children, when brought up to years of understanding in the knowledge of the *Christian* doctrine. — But, *on the contrary*, I will venture to affirm, that if baptism is not to be applied to the *infants* of professing *Christians*, we have not the *least authority* from Scripture to apply it in the manner for which Mr. B. contends ; it being contrary to the *known economy* of God, under every other dispensation, to *hinder* or *debar* infants of believers the *rite* of *initiation* into the church of God.

Once more, under this section, I am charged with *high crimes* not only against Mr. B. but against the *Evangelist Philip*. (r) See *Acts* viii. 37. which says, that *Philip* told the *Eunuch*, *That if he believed with all his heart he might be baptized*. “ Plainly intimating, says “ Mr. B. *that if he did not believe he must not be baptized.*” (s)

I reply, — “ Let this answer of *Philip's* be “ made a *rule* of baptism, and then none must be “ baptized *but what believe with all their heart* ; for “ this, and nothing short of this, is in the answer ; “ but if so, no insincere person should ever be baptized, and will any pretend to say, they are judges “ of the proper subjects of baptism ? ” (t)

What I have said is plainly drawn from this quotation, if *Philip's* answer be made a *rule* of baptism. — And I ask, Why did Mr. B. cite it as a *rule* of baptism, and comment upon it as such, if he will not allow it to be a *rule* ? Mr. B. will truly allow it so far as suits his purpose, but no farther.

He will own, that the answer plainly intimates, *that if the Eunuch did not believe he must not be baptized*. But then, when I take in the *whole* of *Philip's* an-

(r) *Def.* p. 48, 49.(s) *Two Disc.* p. 43.(t) *Append.* p. 31.

swer, and say, If it be a *rule* of baptism, *then none must be baptized but what believe with all their heart*, Mr. B. takes fire for my *presuming* to take the words as they stand, and commenting upon them in their extent. Had I only said, *That hence believing must be a qualification for baptism*, I had pleased him; but neither to *add* nor *diminish* from the answer of *Philip*, “ is to do great injury to *Philip*, in straining “ his words beyond what the circumstances plainly “ shew to be their design.”

Let Mr. B. if he possibly can, draw a more *direct*, *plain*, and *conclusive* consequence from the letter of the commission, *Matt. xxviii. 19.* in favour of every subject of baptism being *first taught*; and then prove he has not *equally strained* the design of them, and done injury to the blessed *Jesus*, before he pretends to fix his charge of my doing *injury* to *Philip*.

I might add, Mr. B. has done manifest injury to *Philip*, by making what he said to the *Eunuch* a *rule of baptism*, which will plainly appear from our offering the *same violence* to that declaration of our Lord's, *Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth not shall be damned.*

Mr. B.'s implication stands thus:

None but believers must be admitted to baptism.

But, Infants are not believers.

Ergo: Infants must not be baptized.

The words of our Lord stand thus:

He that believeth shall not be damned.

But, Infants do not believe.

Ergo: Infants shall be damned.

If Mr. B. will allow the *former* to be good reasoning, I defy him to *disprove* the latter.

But

But if we must not suppose infants *incapable* of becoming the subjects of the kingdom of heaven, by reason of their dying under a *natural* or *physical* incapacity of faith, why must we suppose them incapable of a *rite* which is only significative of the privileges of that kingdom?

The adult person, who *believes not*, is condemned for a *moral defect*, not for a *natural one*.

Those words of *Philip's*, *If thou believest with all thine heart*, were a very kind and serious hint given to the *Eunuch*, which it was his business to examine into. — And it is certain that an *adult person* is guilty of great hypocrisy, who desires baptism, and yet does not believe that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*; but if such a person, who is in his heart an *infidel*, will demand baptism of Mr. B. I see not how he can deny him. — Mr. B. may say, that such a one makes *confession with his mouth*; but that he may do, and yet be infinitely farther off from *believing with all his heart* than an *innocent infant*, as his unbelief is of a *moral nature*, and the want of faith in the infant is only the want of a *natural capacity*.

But he says, “ In answer to my *taunting question*, “ he answers in behalf of himself and his brethren; “ *we are judges of the subjects of baptism* by the profession which they make, which profession, if “ they be unsincere in it, they must answer for it, “ and not we.” (u)

I *reply*, Neither Mr. B. nor his brethren are competent judges of the *subjects* of baptism, if *Philip's* answer is a *rule* of baptism, for which Mr. B. quoted it. — And notwithstanding the ungenerous treatment of Mr. B.'s, I have the inward pleasure arising from a consciousness of due reverence for the *Evangelist*, from a real esteem for every good man; and do abhor the design of vilifying either a *sacred* character, or that of any *professor of Christianity*, or

even that of an *infidel*; much more that of a *whole* body of men, whom I have ever owned as *Christians*, or *visible members* of *Christ's church*.— But if Mr. B. can think impartially, he must own, that I am not guilty, but he himself has done the *injury*, if any is done to *Philip*.



S E C T. V.

Upon the mode of baptism; and upon the Word βαπτίζω, as used, 1 Cor. x. 2.

MR. B. in his *Defence*, charges me with a *mean quibble* in defending the application of the word, βαπτίζω, to a *partial* use of water; or denying, that it always, in the *New Testament*, signifies to *plunge*. Particularly, for asserting that we have an idea of *baptism* without plunging, in the *ISRAELITES* being *baptized unto MOSES* in the *cloud* and in the *sea*.— And he will have it, “ That even here, there was that *encompassing* and “ *overwhelming* of their bodies, which is the very “ design of the action of plunging, and the ne- “ cessary effect of it, when a person is put into the “ water.— If a body is *overwhelmed with a cloud*, “ especially in that extraordinary manner in which “ the *Israelites* were *overwhelmed*; when God was “ pleased, on special occasions, to make his appear- “ ance among them, that body may very well, in “ an allusive sense, be said to be *baptized in the cloud*, “ that is, *dipped in the cloud*, tho’ no hand is made “ use of to perform the action of plunging. And “ in

“ in the like allusive sense, the *Israelites* were fitly
 “ enough said to be *baptized in the sea*, tho’ they
 “ were not, in strictness of speech, *plunged into it* ;
 “ nor indeed, in strictness of speech, could they be
 “ said to be *in the sea*, tho’ encompassed by it in
 “ such a manner as will, with infinitely more pro-
 “ priety, bear the resemblance of being plunged
 “ in it, than if only some drops of it had been
 “ sprinkled or poured upon them.” (x)

This citation is sufficient, of itself, to shew how far Mr. B. will take pains to rack his invention, rather than part with his *confined* sense of the word, βαπτίζω. — But would he not call this a *mean subterfuge* in an adversary ? — What *overwhelming* and *encompassing* can any man imagine, either of the cloud or of the sea did attend the *Israelites*, that can bear the least resemblance to mens being *plunged over head*, or *all over in water* ?

It will be proper to attend to the *history*, and see if there be any thing in it to support such an imagination ; and in *Exod. xiii. 21.* we have an account of the *Lord’s* going before the *Israelites* by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way. And in the *xiv. 19, 20.* The *Angel of God*, which went BEFORE the camp of *Israel*, removed, and went BEHIND them, and the pillar of the cloud came BETWEEN the camp of *Israel* and the camp of the *Egyptians*. — Does this look any thing like an *encompassing* or an *overwhelming* of their bodies ? Could the bodies of the *Israelites* be said, with any propriety, even in an *allusive sense*, to be *dipped* or *plunged* in the cloud ? — Surely Mr. B. was *overwhelmed* in a cloud when he thus attempted to support his *confined* sense of the word, βαπτίζω. The cloud was behind them, *i. e.* between them and the *Egyptians* ; and this was the cloud of *separation*, which answered to the design of *baptism*, and which is to distinguish men and their children from the in-

(x) *Def.* p. 24, 25.

fidet world, as the cloud *separated* the *Israelites* and their children from the *Egyptians*. This, I humbly suppose, St. Paul had in his eye, when he applied the word, *baptize*, to the cloud, as bearing so great an *analogy* with *Christian baptism*; but no *encompassing*, no *overwhelming* at all in it.

And as to his *allusive* sense of *plunging in the sea*, there is as great impropriety in that. — For, *Exod. xiv. 22. The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

Here Mr. B.'s *allusive* sense of the word seems to be full as *obscure* as that of the cloud. — For what resemblance between being *plunged in a river*, and mens walking thro' a *wide passage* made in the sea, on the dry ground, tho' the waters stood as walls on the *outsides* of the thousands of *Israel*; which waters neither inclosed them *behind* nor *before*; no, nor *hung over* them. I freely confess, that could I imagine a resemblance here, or fancy an *encompassing* or *overwhelming* like that of the water's *encompassing* or *overwhelming* a plunged body, dipped quite over in it, I should think myself capable of finding a resemblance in any two *disparates*, or things most *dissimilar* and *unlike* in their appearance.

But, — one would be tempted to think that this *reasoner* had substituted an idea of the *Egyptians* concern in the sea, rather than that of the *Israelites*. And it would suit well his *allusive* sense, or his argument, if St. Paul had happened to have said, that the *Egyptians* were so baptized.

Mr. B. to be sure, did not think it would make for his purpose, or he might have found, in the idea of St. Paul, a beautiful allusion in the word *baptize*, applied to this *separation* of the *Israelites* unto *Moses*; since both *parents* and their *infants* were baptized together, and thus separated to the conduct and guidance of *Moses*; which corresponds with

Christian

Christian parents and their *households* being taken into the *Christian* covenant together, or *separated* to the guidance and conduct of *Jesus*, by baptism. What could be a motive to *St. Paul*'s using the word *Βαπτισμῶ*, in this place, if he had seen no analogy between that *separation* and the *Christian baptismal-separation*? — But if *St. Paul* had considered *Christian-baptism* as *separating* parents from their infants, or as leaving their infants out of the same saving *intention* or *scheme*, then he would not have used the term *baptize* with any propriety; but if he saw an *analogy* between the baptism of the *Israelites* and the baptism of *Christians*, infants must then be included under both, or the analogy is lost, and the *allusive* sense left very obscure and unintelligible. But the *infants* of the *Israelites*; or those under *adult age*, were the *only* persons who received the benefit of this *separation* unto *Moses*, by reaching the possession of the promised land, except *Caleb* and *Joshua*; therefore *their* concern in this baptism was of the most importance. See *Josh. v. 4, 5, 6*.

Here the *allusive* sense will again appear beautiful: Forasmuch as few of those who possessed the *earthly Canaan* had had *adult-baptism*, so there are few among *Christians*, comparatively, who shall possess the *heavenly Canaan*, who were *initiated* into the *Christian* covenant by *adult-baptism*. *Converts* were initiated and all their households together, but none of their descendants brought up in the profession of the *Christian* religion, can be properly said to be *initiated* by baptism in *adult age*; since from children they had been trained up in the *nurture and admonition* of the *Lord*, or had a claim to be so educated, as the *seed* of *Christian* parents.

And baptism, in the sense of *St. Paul*, includes *infants with their parents*, under the same rite.

Nor do I know a better argument for the *continuance* of *water-baptism*, among *Christians*, than its being

ing a *rite of separation or dedication* of the infant-*seed* of *Christian* converts in all ages and nations, who are to be treated as thus *separated to God in Christ*, for holy use.

And thus the obligation is transmitted down from generation to generation : For, as my parents thus obliged themselves to express their homage and fealty in *devoting* me, their infant-offspring, and thus fixing their obligation to educate me in the same faith ; so I make the *return*, in *devoting* and educating mine in the same faith. And without this way of *initiation*, *baptism* might be lost in the world, or there might not be any apparent seed to serve the ascended *Jesus*, who should be *accounted to him for a generation* ; since upon Mr. B.'s principles and practice, none must be admitted as the *visible* members of *Christ's* church, but such as profess their own faith by baptism : And the *few* that actually do so in the world, is so very small at this day, that by no very high figure, we might say, his church is *almost invisible* among men.

Mr. B. has put me upon this *allusive way* of reasoning ; and whether it be not fully as conclusive as his, from St. Paul's representation of the *Israelites* being *baptized in the cloud and in the sea*, I leave to the judgment of my readers.

As to the *emphasis* which Mr. B. has laid on that expression, *Mark* i. 9. viz. *John's baptizing into Jordan*,— I have remarked, “ That it darkens the
“ rendring. That the *preposition* is intelligible
“ when understood to express a *baptizing into* the
“ religion of *Moses*, or of *Christ* ; and so putting on
“ the religion of the one or of the other : But
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(y). *Append.* p. 15, 16.

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In my shewing the impropriety of such an emphatical sense of *eis*, I have mistook *ev* for it, in *Rom.* vi. 4. which Mr. B. charges upon me. (2)

But I do assure him, it was not with *design*; neither was it for want of instances enough, where *eis* would have as well suited my purpose; but was entirely owing to *oversight*.

But as Mr. B. wonders at my *assurance* in affirming the contrary, (a) and continues to insist upon the preposition as *emphatical*, when related to *Jordan*, as if that *confirmed* or *strengthened* the argument for *plunging*; (b) I shall observe, that it seems to be a very mistaken way of laying an *emphasis*; since the preposition, so rendred, diverts the mind from the *true end* of baptism: For *eis*, when related to βαπτίζω, does express the *end* of baptism most usually, if not always, as in the aforementioned place, 1 *Cor.* x. 2. where it governs the *same case*, as in *Mark* i. 9. and is rendred *unto* [*Moses*.]

In which place, *eis tou Mωουϋ*, does express the *proper end* of that baptism of the *Israelites*, as by means of the *cloud* and of the *sea*, they were delivered from their *Egyptian* enemies, and put under the guidance and conduct of *Moses*. — Here the *eis* is intelligible, as it expresses the *end* of baptism, and the *ev* does intend to express the *means* of their baptism. And so the *eis* is to be understood in many places; as *Matth.* xxviii. 19. baptizing them *in* the name of the Father, &c. or initiating them *into* a Constitution which display'd the love of the Father to men, as *universal*, by or thro' the *medium* of the *word incarnate*; own'd to be the *Son of God*, in the highest sense, by the miraculous impartments of *wisdom* and *power*, made to his Apostles and Ministers, who promulgated his gospel. Here the *eis* is expressive of the *end* of baptism. — But when the Apostles

(2) *Def.* p. 28. (a) *Def.* p. 27. (b) *Def.* p. 30, 31.
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(2) *Def. p. 28.* (a) *Def. p. 27.* (b) *Def. p. 32, 31.*
comp. *Twa Disc. p. 28.*

actions are spoken of, relative to the authority by which they acted, then it is ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι, *Acts* iii. 6. In whose name, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι. iv. 7. — And it governs the same case, *Rom.* vi. 3. where it expresses a being baptized into *Christ's* death, or mens obligation to die to sin; or to crucify the *old man*, that the body of sin might be destroy'd. The *into* does not point at the *mode* of baptism, but at the *end* of it. — *Acts* xix. 3. it is rendred, *unto John's* baptism, not *into Jordan*, or *into* the water wherewith *John* baptized, but *unto* or *into* his baptism, which was a baptism of repentance. — If any where the *eis* should be so *emphatical* as to signify *plunging*, one would expect it had been so used in this place, where it is *Eis to Iωάννη βαπτισμῶν*. But the *eis* answers to *what dispensation*? And so it seems to do every where when render'd *into* or *unto*, and not *into* what river or water. *Comp.* 1 *Cor.* i. 13, 15, and *Gal.* iii. 27.

Thus are we said to be all baptized *into* one body, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. which surely none can suppose to signify the *mode* of baptism, but intends to express mens being initiated *into* one society. If, therefore, when *St. Mark* uses the preposition *eis*, to express our Lord's being baptized by *John* in *Jordan*, it must be render'd, as *Mr. B.* would have it, *into*, it will be a very *singular* rendring; since, when so render'd in all other places, it signifies some *end*. — So *St. Paul* uses it, in relation to other things. See 2 *Thess.* ii. 10, 11. — *That they might be saved.* — *That they should believe a lie.* *Eis*, i. e. *to the end they might be saved*, &c. I should rather think the *eis*, in *Mark* i. 9. must properly signify the *place*; as *in*, *by*, or *towards Jordan*. *St. Paul* uses it to signify *towards* a place, *Acts* xxviii. 14. — And so we went *towards Rome*. Where the preposition governs the *same case*; which cannot mean *into Rome*, from the next verse telling us, that from thence the brethren met them short of *Rome*. — It signifies *towards* a being, *Luk.* xvi. 21.

Es *God*. towards God, not *into* God. — And it is render'd *towards*, three times in one verse, 1 *Thess.* iii. 12. — and *towards*, 2 *Ep.* i. 3. and *to*, 1 *Ep.* v. 15. to all men. So that if *toward* be a proper rendring of the preposition, why may we not suppose that *Mark* represents *John*, as baptizing *Jesus*, in some place *by*, or *towards* *Jordan*?

Mr. B. says, indeed, “ That it is no pleasure to him to engage in *criticisms*, but his opponent will force him to it. That he makes no difficulty to allow that the *Greek* preposition *es*, according as it is joined with other words in the sentence, is sometimes used to signify *in*, and sometimes *among*, as well as most usually *into*, which is its *native* and *primary* sense.” (c) But then, in his *Defence*, p. 30. he says, “ He is still of the same mind,” i. e. as to the rendring of the preposition *es*, in *Mark* i. 9.

The gentleman should be pitied, if this was true. — But I am obliged to ask, — What can he mean by *my forcing him to engage in criticism*, when he himself began with the *emphatical* sense of *es*, and gave it that *singular, uncouth* rendring, viz. *INTO Jordan*? — Whether he has considered it, in its proper relation to other words in the sentence, I now leave others to judge. — I think he has not; and to me, his rendring it *into*, in that place, seems to have nothing but his *own imagination* to support it; for there it surely is relative to *place*, and not to the *action* of baptizing. — The *texts* which I cited, to shew the impropriety of his *emphasis*, were *Matth.* xv. 24. *Acts* ii. 38. vii. 53. (d) — Which texts, he says, might as well be rendered a baptizing *into* the remission of sins, as *unto*. And our Lord was sent *into* the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, as well as *unto*. — And by the disposition of angels, *among* or *into* the midst of military orders of angels. (e) — And

(c) *Def.* p. 28. (d) *Append.* p. 16. (e) *Def.* p. 29.

if he had rendered it *among*, in this text in *Mark*, I should not differ with him, i. e. if he supplied, *among the rivulets of Jordan*.—I would refer my reader to a late Tract, call'd, *A Review and Vindication of a late Treatise on the Subject and Mode of Baptism*, from p. 44. to 47. which well supports such rendring as *among*.

But Mr. B. says, "There will be greater difficulty than I imagine, in supposing our Lord was not plunged when he was baptized, if I compare the words of St. *Matth.* iii. 16. *Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water*; as it is said of *Philip and the Eunuch*, *Acts* viii. 38. yet when St. *Mark* says expressly, that *John* baptized *Jesus into Jordan*, and there is no room for a figurative meaning; and when St. *Matthew*, the other Evangelist, assures us, that *Jesus being baptized, went up straightway from the water*:"—

Hence he concludes our Lord was *plunged*. And he says farther, "That if *Mark* does not mean *into Jordan*, what is the meaning of *eis ta u'dap*, in the *Acts*, when applied to *Philip and the Eunuch*?" (f)

I tell the gentleman, that notwithstanding his offence at my making use of the Greek, I am so far qualified as to discern, that his use of the *eis* is very whimsical; and I deny, that it, with propriety, can signify *INTO*, where he says it is the *express* sense and *emphatical*.

But as to our Lord's *coming up straightway from the water*.—And their *coming up out of the water*, mentioned in the *Acts*.—All Mr. B. has said upon this (g), appears to me very inconclusive: For, allowing, that they *went down* into the water, and *came up out of the water*, the *going down* or the *coming up out of*, will by no means express or intimate what was the *action of baptizing*; but only do represent the *joint action* of *Philip* and of the *Eunuch*, *before and after baptism*; and therefore, to infer *plunging* from hence,

(f) *Def.* p. 29.

(g) *Ibid.* p. 30, 31.

discovers too great prejudice.— *Besides*, if the actions of going down, and coming up out of, did indicate plunging, it would equally shew, that Philip was plunged with the Eunuch.

Moreover, it is well known, that the country where they were, was a land of hills and of valleys. To come, therefore, at the water in the valleys, they must go down to them; and to leave them, they must come up from them.— But a going down into the water, must be determined in its sense and import, from the design and end of so going down. This, in the case before us, was to make use of some water for baptism; but the quantity to be made use of, will not be determined, either by the going down into the water, or the coming up out of it. It no way explains the mode of the action itself, either of John's applying water to Jesus, or of Philip's applying water to the Eunuch.

The text in Matthew has *απο*, from; but our Lord's baptism was quite over before he thus ascended from the water; which, surely, he might do without having been plunged. Nor does it appear from the Bible History, that John was authorized to plunge [in baptizing] either our Lord or any other person, but the contrary; forasmuch, as the sacramental use of water among the Jewish priests had ever been by sprinkling. I mean that water, called the water of separation, which seems to have had a correspondent design with John's baptism, supposed to be applied also to the proselytes of righteousness. — For John was of the race of the priests, the son of Zacharias; so that it is incumbent on Mr. B. to shew what authority John had for plunging, or using baptismal water contrary to the appointed custom of using the purifying water. — The word βαπτίζω will not be of any avail, since it has been observed, that the Greek language has many other words of lesser latitude, and which would not have been capable of signifying less than plunging. (b)

(b) See the Challenge, p. 17. Note.

I might

I might have observed, that no greater stress should be laid upon the phrase, *coming out of*, than upon the phrase, *coming from a place*; since Dr. Scott has observed, that the Syriac makes no distinction between *απο*, which we render *from*, and *ἐκ*, which we render *out of*. (i)

Mr. B.'s great acquaintance with the Greek, must enable him to know what others affirm, who are very conversant with the best Greek writers, viz. that *απο* signifies *from*, as properly as it does *out of*; and that there is no manner of stress to be laid upon it, in the present controversy.

I add, — Unless it may have its sense determined by the relation which it has to the verb, *βαπτίζω*. — But as Mr. B. allows that *ἐν* is to be understood to signify *in* or *among*, as well as *into*; as it is joined with other words in the sentence: (k) So I should think, that *απο*, and *ἐκ* too, may signify *from*, when joined with *βαπτίζω*. — Since it has been sufficiently shewn, “ That *βαπτίζω* manifestly signifies to pour on
“ water. That it usually denotes a very different
“ action of applying some liquid to a subject, to what *βαπτίζω*
“ does; which denotes, the putting somewhat into a
“ liquid; and that this might be proved even from
“ those Greek authors, cited by Dr. Gale. (l)

“ And that whatever the word *βαπτίζω* signifies, it
“ matters not in the present case; since, tho’ it is
“ frequently used in the *New Testament*, where *dipping into* is plainly intended, it is never there used
“ with regard to the ordinance of BAPTISM. Our
“ Lord’s forerunner is never called, ὁ Βαπτιστής, the Dip-
“ per. The sacramental washing, instituted by Christ,
“ is no where called *βαπτισμός*, or by any word that un-
“ deniably imports *dipping*. And the act of admi-
“ nistring baptism is always expressed by *baptizo*, not

(i) See his Notes on *Matth. iii. 16.* (k) *Def. p. 28.*

(l) See a *Treatise on the Subjects and Mode of Baptism*, p. 43. and onwards.

“ by *bapto*. The question then is, What does this
 “ verb *baptizo* import? And the true answer is
 “ this: It signifies either to *wash*, which way soever
 “ the washing is performed, or particularly to *pour*
 “ on or *sprinkle*.” (m)

This writer has, with great judgment, made and
 supported the *distinction*; as may be seen in the *Treatise*
 referred to in the *margin*. And, with the utmost
 propriety, *baptism* does appear to be an application of
water to a body, and not the application of a body to
water.

It was ever so used, as *sacramental-water*. It in-
 tends no more, in the baptism of the *Spirit* than a
pouring on. In the baptism of *blood*, it intends only
 a *partial* application; and from the baptismal appli-
 cation of water in the New Testament, it appears to
 have been made, by having the body for the *subject*
 of such baptisms.—It was not likely, that the *Jaylor*
 and his whole family should be *plunged* in his house;
 neither that those *other households* should be plunged,
 nor that the 3000 should be plunged, *men and wo-*
men, and, most probably, *children* together.

Tho’ Mr. B. “ will have it *much more probable*,
 “ (n) that they separated from their infants at their
 “ baptism, committing them for a few moments to
 “ some by-standers, who had no children present,
 “ than that they offered *incapable subjects* to the
 “ administration of that ordinance; since, as soon
 “ as they themselves were baptized, they might take
 “ their infants again, and go home.”

The very notion or apprehension of their infants
 being *incapable subjects*, must have greatly alarm’d
 this *Jewish* multitude! and does appear in so *obnox-*
ious and *offensive* a view, that not any thing was more
 likely to have given them a *disgust* to *Christianity*.—
 Can any man, who attends to the New Testament

(m) See the *Review and Vindication of a late Treatise, &c.*
 p. 31.

(n) *Def.* p. 58.

accounts of this people, once imagine, that they would *tamely*, and without *any reluctance*, submit to a rite of initiation, and put their infants into the arms of others, or be *separated* from them when they themselves were baptized? — A *people*, who had always looked upon their children as *included* with themselves in all the divine purposes, either of *mercy* or of *judgment*, towards them!

Let any man consider this 3000, as most probably having in it some of that very multitude, mentioned, *Matth. xxvii. 25.* who thus answered *Pilate*, — *His blood be on us, and on our children!* and then, let him make *Mr. B.'s separation*, if he is able. — Would they not be solicitous as for themselves, so for their children, upon whom they had imprecated the *curse*, to be included in the dispensation of pardon? — They were a people that would always *covenant* and *engage* for their children, as well as themselves; and were *unlikely* to take it into their heads to admit of a *quiet separation* of their infant-children from themselves, at their submitting to the initial rite.

They were, of all people, the *most unlikely* to part with their children, or separate from them, or receive the rite without them: — For, they never had been told, that their *infants* had no right; and if they had, *much more* satisfaction must have been given them, than what does appear from the New Testament history, or they would never have consented to such a *separation* of themselves from their children. — But the *contrary* appears to have been the case, and stands confirmed by the baptism of *households*, upon the profession of their heads.

Neither is it to be supposed, that this 3000 was *plunged*: The *law of Decency*, as well as that of using the *water of separation*, forbade it: And, of consequence, the prepositions *απο*, and *ἐκ*, may be well understood, when related to *Christian baptism*, as only expressive of coming *from* the water, *by* or *in* which

which they had been *baptized*, but not *plunged*: Some water having been applied to their bodies, and not their bodies to the water.

The *Baptists*, as they call themselves, are properly *dippers*, but not *baptizers*. And that application of water, which they call *rantizing* or *baby-sprinkling*, is most truly and properly *baptizing*. — “Our Anti-
“ *paedobaptists* are *Sebaptizers*,” says a late writer. (o)
— They do indeed, *in part*, dip themselves, by going *into* the water. They dip a *part* of themselves, and assist the minister in dipping the *other part*.

The *above writer* “has challenged the most learned
“ of the *Antipaedobaptists* to produce any clear
“ evidence of *baptism* being administer’d by *dipping*,
“ in the primitive times, or before the close of the
“ II^d century; about which time *crossing*, *anointing*,
“ &c. came in.” (p)

And farther, it would be worth Mr. B.’s while to remove the force of argument which lies against the *Antipaedobaptists*; in that late Tract, call’d, *a Review and Vindication*, &c. p. 29, 30. where this question is asked, “When and where, then, did the first
“ *Antipaedobaptists* appear?” He answers, “In
“ *Germany*, about, or little more than 200 years
“ since. — *Cyprian*, indeed, with other *antients*, were
“ a kind of *Anabaptists*: They pleaded for *re-bap-*
“ *tizing* in some cases. But (some of the old *Mon-*
“ *tanists* excepted) *Antipaedobaptists* there were none,
“ or none that we can plainly and certainly disco-
“ ver, before the XVIth century; and none of
“ any account for *learning* and *piety*, or *either*, before
“ the last. *This witness is true; and what none of our*
“ *ANTI PAEDOBAPTISTS*, with all their abilities and
“ *zeal, can fairly disprove.*”

(o) *A Treatise on the Subjects*, &c. p. 54.

(p) *Ibid.* p. 51. *Review*, &c. p. 55.

Moreover, I have been informed, by a *worthy gentleman*, who has conversed very familiarly with several of the adult-baptizers in *Holland*, that they do not *plunge*, but only *sprinkle* or *pour on* water; nay, they reckon, that their *brethren* in *England* do lay an *undue stress* upon plunging. — The author of *the Review and Vindication, &c.* has likewise taken notice of this, p. 30. Note (z) — Total immersion is not essential in the sense of “*foreign Antipaedobaptists*, “ who, it is said, baptize by *sprinkling*, or *pouring on* “ of water.”

I would then, before I conclude, ask Mr. B. this question, — If *plunging* be an *essential* to baptism; and baptism only to be applied to adult-persons; so that none but *such* persons, *so* baptized, do make a profession of their *own faith*, or are *visible* members of *Christ's* church, — What must we esteem *foreign Antipaedobaptists*, and all others, who come short of this standard? Shall we *unchristianize* all but the almost *imperceptible few*, who have submitted to be *dipped* in adult-age? Shall we deny, that a number of Mr. B.'s *bearers*, and *thousands* of others, who attend *public worship*, in other societies of his denomination, but are not dipped; shall we deny, that these make any profession of their *own faith*? and that the *faith* and *repentance* of all Paedobaptists is *invalid*, without a *rebaptization by plunging*?

Methinks there is much more *arrogancy* in such an insinuation, than any good man, in a cool thought, can approve: For it seems, that tho' men *believe* in *Christ*, and do *love* and *honour* him; yea, have, as they think, been initiated into his church, by *baptism*; yet, if they do not *renounce* that their baptism, and submit to be *plunged*, in Mr. B.'s way, they have made *no profession of their own faith*, nor are they *visible members* of *Christ's* church.

Dr.

Dr. Gale has said nothing less than Mr. B. — See his *Reflections, &c.* p. 80, 81. where he concludes, “ That none are baptized, but believers, dipped into the water ; and that such who are not so baptized, are not rightly initiated ; and have no title to church-membership, but should be disclaimed.”

Upon the whole, I presume this to be a fair conclusion, that all *assuming airs* and *pretensions* to undoubted evidence in favour of a *mode*, which has nothing to support it, either *from former dispensations*, or *from reason*, or *from the Gospel*, [as I hope I have shewn *plunging in baptism* has not] all such *airs* had much better be laid aside ; and, at least, the *plunging-baptizers* should allow, that those who *differ* from them, may differ with as much *reason*, as much *integrity*, and with as good *understandings* as they themselves differ from others.

To conclude. I am aware that controversies among *Christians* have generally a very bad effect in making divisions *wider*, by *heightning* animosities, and exciting uncharitable dispositions towards one another ; and that true morality, the *spirit* and *life* of religion, has thereby extremely suffered. But as I have not offered any thing knowingly that is unworthy the *Christian* character ; and have an ardent desire of being found myself holding *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* ; so, I humbly hope, I have given to no one any *just reason* of offence. I am conscious of an affectionate esteem for all good men, who differ from me in the spirit of charity. At the *same time*, I abhor *bigotry* in any, as it has been productive of the most *direful effects* in religious societies ; and, so far as it prevails, *spoils* the best tempers, and *sullies* the glory of the most pious characters.

I would take leave of the controversy, by offering up that prayer of the Apostle's : — *Now the God*

God of patience and consolation, grant us to be like-minded
one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that
with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God, even
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. — Receiving one
another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

FINIS



I would take leave of the controversy, by offer-
ing up that prayer of the Apostles: — Wee the
glory of the most pious character.
and, so far as it prevails, keep the best tempers, and
one of the most useful effects in religious societies;
now, I submit again in any, as it has been produc-
ed from me in the spirit of charity. At the same
of an affectionate esteem for all good men, who dis-
to no one any religious difference. I am conscious
the Lord of Years, and my hope, I have given
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TRACTS ON BAPTISM,

Respecting the
MODE and SUBJECTS of it.

NOW REPUBLISHED,

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| <p>I. <i>Plunging</i>, a subject of bigotry, when made essential to baptism.</p> <p>II. A <i>plea for infants</i>, or the Scripture-doctrine of water-baptism stated.</p> <p>III. An <i>appendix</i> to the plea for infants, in which their right to baptism is vindicated against the reverend Mr. <i>Joseph Burroughs's</i> attempt to exclude them, in his two discourses relating to positive institutions.</p> <p>IV. A <i>farther defence</i> of infant-baptism, occasioned by a pamphlet, called, the plea for infants implead-</p> | <p>ed, published at <i>Canterbury</i>, 1742. signed, <i>Dan. Dobel</i>.</p> <p>V. The <i>challenge</i>, occasioned by an answer to a late treatise on the subject and mode of baptism, wherein <i>John's</i> baptizing in rivers is accounted for, and his baptizing in them must have been by <i>sprinkling</i>, and not by <i>plunging</i>.</p> <p>VI. A <i>defence</i> of infant-baptism, or a vindication of the <i>appendix</i>, &c. against the reverend Mr. <i>Joseph Burroughs's</i> defence of his two discourses.</p> |
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WITH AN
INTRODUCTION to the whole.

By CALEB FLEMING.

L O N D O N :

Printed for RICHARD KING at the Bible and Crown in Fore-street ; and JAMES WAUGH at the Turk's Head in Gracechurch-street. 1745.

TRACTS

APPENDIX

Containing the

Names and Subjects of the

Tracts

1. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	2. The Christian's Duty to himself
3. The Christian's Duty to his Country	4. The Christian's Duty to his Family
5. The Christian's Duty to his Church	6. The Christian's Duty to his Society
7. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	8. The Christian's Duty to himself
9. The Christian's Duty to his Country	10. The Christian's Duty to his Family
11. The Christian's Duty to his Church	12. The Christian's Duty to his Society
13. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	14. The Christian's Duty to himself
15. The Christian's Duty to his Country	16. The Christian's Duty to his Family
17. The Christian's Duty to his Church	18. The Christian's Duty to his Society
19. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	20. The Christian's Duty to himself
21. The Christian's Duty to his Country	22. The Christian's Duty to his Family
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25. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	26. The Christian's Duty to himself
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31. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	32. The Christian's Duty to himself
33. The Christian's Duty to his Country	34. The Christian's Duty to his Family
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37. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	38. The Christian's Duty to himself
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49. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	50. The Christian's Duty to himself
51. The Christian's Duty to his Country	52. The Christian's Duty to his Family
53. The Christian's Duty to his Church	54. The Christian's Duty to his Society
55. The Christian's Duty to his Neighbour	56. The Christian's Duty to himself
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THE
INTRODUCTION
TO SOME

Tracts on Baptism.

THE publishing together, of the following tracts, on the subject of baptism, I have thus long delayed, from an expectation of a *reply* to my last defence. As I hear nothing of it, I shall now finish what I have to offer, with some *remarks and reviews*.

By this *publication* they may be put into the hands of those who chuse to buy them, at a much easier rate than they could be done in single pamphlets.

There are indeed several errors which have escaped the press: Yet none, I imagine, but what a *careful and catholic reader* will easily correct. And *repetitions* have been unavoidable from the manner of their publication. Had these essays met with that reception, which I had the vanity to expect, a more correct edition might possibly have taken place.

As they now appear, — in the opinion of several gentlemen of character, they contain some more conclusive views of the argument, than are found in other writings on the subject. And as single pamphlets, though ever so well wrote, are liable to many inconveniencies, which when collected they are secured from, I have chosen this method.

It must be owned, that the subject is but dry ; and is reckoned *too heavy* for the taste of the present age. — But surely, as our *brethren*, of most denominations, think it their duty to practise *infant-baptism*, they should encourage the pains taken to enable them to form a distinct and clear notion of the reasonableness of it ; especially, when so many things are published, with much assurance, [by the adult baptizers,] of our having *nothing* that will support our practice.

The points of controversy, are, whether baptism is to be applied by *sprinkling* water on the subject, or by *immersion* or *plunging* in water ? And, whether the application of the baptismal rite, that was used by *John* the harbinger, and by the disciples of *Jesus*, to initiate into the Messiah's kingdom, may be warrantably applied to the *infants* of professing christians ? or, Whether it must be *limited* to adult persons embracing the Christian religion, and to those who have been educated from their infancy to mature age, in the profession of Christianity ?

I have pleaded for the baptism of *infants*, as what I now think may be supported upon the
scrip-

scripture-plan; at the same time I have supposed the faith of adult persons necessarily *pre-requisite* to their baptism, and to that of their households, upon their relinquishing either *Judaism* or *Paganism*. So that the single point of debate between me and adult baptizers, [with regard to subjects] is, *Whether the infants of believing parents may be baptized?* I have concluded, that the *scripture-history of facts* will support the right of infant-children to baptism, upon the faith of their parents; since several households were baptized upon the faith of their heads: And infants have been initiated members of the *Abrahamic* and the *Mosaic* dispensations, and no excluding edict is found under the Christian. So that applying baptism first to believing parents, and then to their off-spring, is in exact conformity to the rule of former dispensations; and to deny them admission, is to break through the settled rule of God's dispensations.

I have farther observed, that the *pre-requisite* faith did not necessarily imply *virtuous* character, but a persuasion *only* that Jesus was the Christ, which being professed, did entitle men to baptism; ay, and to the receiving of miraculous gifts, though they were such persons, as in the last day, would be found workers of iniquity, *Matt. vii. 22, 23.*

And hence I have concluded, that baptism was no more than a rite which initiated men into a kingdom, polity, or state of privileges; to which the *infants* of all professing Christians are entitled by their birth and situation: And that of consequence, baptism may be applied to them,

them, as an external ritual, which openly asserts this their right.

On the contrary, adult-baptizers suppose virtuous, moral character, and a very competent knowledge of the Christian doctrines as pre-requisites to baptism.

This demand of theirs, appears to me, to rise far above the first, the pure gospel-state of things; for when the gospel was first published, those who embraced it were frequently told by the apostles, of its being the effect of the *free grace* of God that they had been called and admitted into that kingdom, and not to any furniture of knowledge, or any works of righteousness which they had done. They were admitted into a state of favour, of life, or privileges *antecedent* to any respect had to their virtue or obedience. See to this purpose, the reverend Mr. JOHN TAYLOR's *Key to the Apostolic Writings*, N^o. 50, 113, 115, and 140.

And that *useful writer* has well marked the *distinction* that should be observed between the *antecedent* life and the *consequent* life. Or, between that life which the mere good-will of God has freely given, by admitting to the privileges of the gospel, and that life of virtue and holiness to which the grace of the gospel obliges its professors.

But the adult-baptizers seem to have confounded this original distinction, by their making moral character, or an advanced state of knowledge and virtue, a *pre-requisite* to men's being admitted into this gospel-state of privileges.

The

The above writer agrees with what I have advanced in these tracts, when he says, N°. 250. "That it is evident what that faith is, which gave a right to the FIRST *justification*, or an admission into the kingdom of God in this world. Certainly it was such a faith as was consistent with a man's perishing eternally."

I proceed next to take some notice of a *pamphlet* lately published by Mr. GRANTHAM KILLINGWORTH, entitled, *Remarks on the several answers to a pamphlet, called, Christianity not founded on argument, with his two letters to a learned divine*. This writer has laid so great a stress on *adult-plunging-baptism*, as that without it no man can possibly make a *part* of the Christian church, or be a *member* of it. A pamphlet published with such an *unchristian* spirit, renders some remarks upon it very proper for one who is defending infant-baptism. His words are these, at the end of his first letter — "You will not account me uncharitable in my zeal, — although I cannot allow those christians to be members of the true visible church of Christ, who have never yet *put on Christ by baptism*. — Since I am convinced that he has not appointed any other way for believers in him to be initiated into, or made members of, his church here on earth. And I am very far from carrying what I have here said any farther."

If the *spirit* of this writer could be supposed to be the spirit of that *denomination* of Christians, the charge of *bigotry* must inevitably fix upon them. But, what does the gentleman mean

mean by calling us *Christians*, if he thinks we are *not Christians*? If we are what he says we are, how can we be otherwise than a *part* of Christ's mystical body, the church? To be Christians, and yet not members of the visible church of Christ, is a *solecism* like that of the *Papists*, who as stupidly as insolently do monopolize the title of *Catholicks*; when, at the same time, they have no charity but for persons within their own pale.—— In like manner this writer; —— *We are Christians, but we are not Christians*. It would greatly enlighten the world, if Mr. K. would unriddle this paradox, and shew, *How a man can be a Christian, and yet, not be a member of the true visible church of Christ*. —— The *tares* grow in the same field with the wheat, and the *gospel-net* incloses both good and bad; whilst therefore we are in the *same* field, or in the *same* net, we are really members of the *same* church, though we should prove but *bad* ones.

However, he cannot allow us to be members. But let not this offend; because the *charitable* man is not for carrying the matter any farther. —— And indeed one would think, the exclusion he would make is enough for any charitable man. Doubtless, there are *many* charitable men that would be satisfied without carrying the matter quite so far. ——

Great, nevertheless, are our obligations to this *good-natur'd* gentleman, who will only exclude us from *Christian communion*, because we are not baptized with *his* baptism: For he won't, after this, directly thrust us into hell!

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He is very far from doing this. — But what if his charity should allow us to get to heaven? That is, if we can find a way thither which he does not know of, another way, than what he is convinced is the *only appointed* way to be made members of Christ's church! Why then, I am afraid, this *good man* will scarce like our company. It is ten to one, but he will be for charging us with *not coming in at the right door*. — I mean, if he should carry to heaven with him the same charitable spirit he now possesses.

But if he should at present think us to be *real Christians*, and *heirs of glory*, though not qualified for communion with him here on earth, I would advise him to offer this his opinion in *demonstration* to an Infidel, *that Christianity is founded on argument*, viz. that a man may be, what at the same time he is not. — And thus, let him purge his own dear self of those *inconsistencies* he would endeavour to fix upon others.

In his second letter he says, “ If there is no
 “ initiating rite to be observed, whereby be-
 “ lievers are to be constituted members of his
 “ [Christ's] visible church, can they be at all
 “ accountable to any church for their conver-
 “ sation? Or is it possible, even for gross im-
 “ moralities, to cast those out of the church
 “ who have never been received into it?”

This *concern* would have had no place with Mr. K. had he considered, that Christian baptism was never designed to initiate into any *particular* church, congregation, sect, or party of Christians; but, in the sense of the institution, was to initiate into the kingdom of God under Jesus.

B

So

So that whosoever baptizeth in such a narrow confined view, baptizeth not in the name of *Jesus*; but in his *own* Name. And hence it follows, that as baptism was never intended to initiate men into *distinct* communities or parties of Christians, it cannot give to any one division or denomination a greater right to exercise the discipline here contended for, than it can give to another. *Farther*, by the phrase, *casting of the church*, in this writer, surely cannot mean, a *casting out* from baptism; but rather, from some exercise of religious worship which is repeated, as an act of *Christian-communion*; and this should seem to be the *eucharist*.

But those who have had no other baptism than *infant-baptism*, by desiring to communicate in the ordinance of the supper, do, to all intents and purposes, equally with persons adultly baptized, own and acknowledge themselves to have been *initiated*; and therefore, the church or *particular* congregation, by admitting such to partake of the memorial rite, has as fast hold of them, as it could have had, by their being *plunged at adult age*.

In page 7. he tells us, " That those persons
 " are very far from having a due regard to
 " Christ's institutions, who pretend, that pro-
 " fessors of all denominations, nay, that persons
 " unbaptized, may all communicate, or eat bread
 " and drink wine together at the Lord's table in
 " remembrance of Christ: Which opinion, big
 " with many evils, is neither founded on the
 " word of God, nor the practice of the church
 " in any age; nor yet upon the reason and na-

ture

“ ture of things, but only upon *mere complai-*
 “ *sance*, under the *false notion* of manifesting
 “ their charity to other Christians.”

This *invidious charge* would surely have much better become an enemy of liberty, and of the right of private judgment, than a Protestant.

Is it possible that any one, in the judgment of charity, can suppose, that a man who makes conscience of commemorating the death of Jesus, by the observance of a positive rite, is wholly *unconcerned* about complying with his Lord's will in the *other* positive rite?—And who is to judge for me, about my baptism, but myself, when at years of discretion? If I am persuaded that my *infant-dedication* was in agreement with the gospel institution of baptism, I have as good a right to commemorate the death of Christ with other Christians, as he, who has understood *baptism* in a different light. The revelation no where authorizes men to *refuse* or *reject* one another on such difference.—And if I be not misinformed, Mr. K. would not scruple to communicate with persons of very opposite sentiments in doctrinals, or opinions, such as, *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians*, or *Arians* and *Athanasians*, and with *Calvinists* and *Arminians*. So far he is truly catholic. But then, they must be every one of them qualified in his sense, *i. e.* they *must be baptized at adult age, and with plunging*.—The want of this, will spoil all his *catholicism*; and set him at as great a distance from them, in the point of Christian communion, as if they were mere *heathen-men*

or *publicans* ! As to that *rite*, which was instituted for the use of *all* who profess to be the disciples of Jesus, by his consent, they shall not partake of it.—And for his own part, he will not communicate with them : “ They pay no “ due regard to Christ’s institutions, who shew “ their Christian charity to such persons.” And if he himself was to communicate with infant-baptized persons, it would be only “ *mere com-
“ plaisance*, under the false notion of manifest-
“ ing charity.” Thus I here chuse to understand him, as meaning himself ; for it would be *unpardonable impudence* in him to sit thus in judgment upon his brethren ! — And although, he has charged the opinion, *as big with evils*, it is not, I humbly imagine, in his power to prove it. His own inflamed resentment must unhappily have so disturbed his organs, that some *horrid pictures* of the things have been painted on his imagination. — But,

This *prejudiced* gentleman manifestly inverts the order of things ; for as Dr. JER. HUNT, of amiable and pious memory, I know, has often said, “ Piety and extensive virtue are final in “ religion : Principles of truth are instrumen-
“ tal : What is positive is to be regarded only
“ as means. * ”

Without doubt, every inflamed bigot is as fully persuaded of the justness of his zeal, as is Mr. K. — But what would become of the church of Christ, if every man, so confident,
should

* Dr. LARDNER has taken notice of this in his funeral sermon, p. 41.

should be able to exert his zeal in *overt-acts* !
Surely the body of Christ would undergo the
most dreadful schisms !——But,

Methinks, his zeal seems to be greatly akin to
that of the reverend DEAN SWIFT's, which ap-
pears in a sermon of his, on *the testimony of con-*
science, wherein he falls foul on *Protestant dis-*
senters in the following words. “There is like-
“ wise another evil, that men often say, a thing
“ is against their conscience, when it really is
“ not. For instance; ask any of those who
“ differ from the worship established, why they
“ do not come to church, they will say, they
“ dislike the ceremonies, the prayers, the ha-
“ bits, and the like, and therefore it goes against
“ their conscience: But they are mistaken,
“ their teacher hath put those words into their
“ mouth; for a man's conscience can go no
“ higher than his knowledge; and therefore till
“ he has thoroughly examined by Scripture and
“ the practice of the ancient church, whether
“ those points are blameable or no, his consci-
“ ence cannot possibly direct him to condemn
“ them.”

Just so, this gentleman, seems to think it is
with us; we have none of us examined with
that care and judgment with which he and his
brethren have done, in the affair of baptism;
and therefore we have no conscience, but in the
point of difference, we are blind or infatuated.
Hence, “ that *adult-baptizer* must have no due
“ regard to Christ's institutions who communi-
“ cates with us, at the supper. It is a *mere piece*
“ of *complaisance*, and a *false notion* of mani-
“ festing

“festing charity.”——But is there not a possibility that the bulk of Protestant Dissenters may have examined as carefully, as the bulk of those in the establishment; and as possible likewise, that men may embrace infant-baptism with as clear heads and as honest hearts as Mr. K. ? And if this be possible, his invidious charge against his *brethren* communicating with us is very contemptible !

Nevertheless, in whatever disposition Mr. K. might be, had he the *civil sword* in his hand, he could not, in the DEAN’s sense, at all affect *the liberty of our consciences* : For that great divine has declared, “that properly speaking, LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, is no more than
“a liberty of knowing our own thoughts,
“which no man can take from us.” * —

Glorious definition ! How blessed a thing is this liberty, which can live untouched even in the hellish *inquisition* !——But, by the religion of nature, and by that of Jesus, we have not only the power of knowing our own thoughts, but we have an unalienable right of forming our judgments just as we are able, by the light of evidence ; and of conforming our behaviour to such judgment, that we *ourselves* form of things. So that neither the censures of the *Dean*, the excommunications of Mr. K. nor the exclusive voice of all the *hierarchies* upon earth, can ever cut us off from Christ’s body the church.

I wish

* See the three sermons published by *Doddsley*.

I wish Mr. K. had adverted to that excellent advice of Dr. HUNT's in his sermon on *penance*, p. 37. "Let us, *says he*, take care that we do not raise positive duties above moral, which are of eternal and immutable obligation, and the end of true religion. And yet, let us be careful to observe what bears the stamp of divine authority. Let us not insolently make a religion for God, but receive it as he has delivered it to us by reason and revelation; nor tamely take one from uninspired and fallible men."—— With a very different spirit,

These gentlemen are ready to charge us with perverting the sense of Scripture, when we infer from *Matth. xxviii. 19.* that the infants of persons already disciplined may be baptized; or if we say, that this text does not require discipling or teaching to precede baptism in every subject of it: Whereas this writer, in his first letter, p. 100. gives this as his sense of *John iii. 5. viz.* "By being born of the Spirit, I understand, that moral change made by the ordinary influences of the Spirit of God, through which every believer ought to pass, before he enters into the visible church of Christ."

Our Lord's words are, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*—— From these words Mr. K. roundly concludes, "That a moral change made by the ordinary influences of the Spirit ought to precede a man's entering into the visible church of Christ." Thus he not only inverts the order in which *water* and the *Spirit* are placed, but he fixes upon such a sense of the

the *Spirit*, as, perhaps, is not tenable. — For by the *Spirit*, should here seem to intend a change of religion, or, at least, a renouncing of those gross and worldly views that the *Jews* had got of the Messiah's kingdom.

Nicodemus, by his coming to Jesus in the night, was evidently afraid of the *excommunication* of the Sanhedrim; and therefore, he durst not confess him openly. He had very earthly, gross, low views and conceptions of the Messiah's kingdom, as appears by our Lord's answer to him, *ver. 3. Except a man be born from above*, [*ανωθεν*] *he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*. So the word [*ανω*] is explained, *chap. viii. 23. Jesus says to the Jews, Ye are from beneath, I am from above, i. e. Ye are of this world, I am not of this world*. Our Lord's twelve disciples were under the same prejudice; and he tells them, that unless it was removed, they could not enter into the kingdom of God, *Matth. xviii. 3*. And yet, all this while they were the members of Christ's *visible* church, though they had not this moral disposition.

Which *disqualifying* prejudice, we are informed, did not disappear among them till after our Lord's Resurrection, *Acts i. 6*. From which we may remark, that these very disciples, under this disqualifying prejudice, were admitted to a participation of the memorial rite in its first institution, — they were *visible* members. — What foundation is there then for Mr. K.'s sense of *John iii. 5*? None at all: But the assertion is quite groundless, *viz. That no one should be baptized, till a moral change has been wrought in him*
by

by the ordinary influences of the Spirit. And that none should be admitted to Christian communion, but such as have received adult plunging-baptism, under such qualification. What, shall the mode of a positive rite be the sole criterion, mark, or stamp of men's qualification for partaking of the favours or privileges of the gospel-constitution? A rite, of which the *insincere* as well as the *sincere* may partake! Shall this rite set bounds to our brotherly love? Nay, shall we be led by the *different mode* of its application to receive or disown men as members or not of Christ's church? — In another place this gentleman seems to have given the argument on the side of infant-baptism, p. 87. for when telling us, what is meant by *being baptized into Christ*, he says, "The general sense is most evidently this, that we are baptized into the solemn profession and acknowledgment of his religion — just as the *Jews* being baptized into *Moses*, implied in it, in the sentiment of *St. Paul*, their owning him as their leader, and his instructions to be divine." — Neither is this a transient thought of this writer, but in p. 93. he again says, " *St. Paul* for a prelude to Christian baptism, fixes on the *Israelites* being baptized in the cloud and in the sea." —

We join issue with this writer, and say, that just as the *Jews* were baptized into *Moses*, so were men to be baptized into Christ. And that the *Jews* being baptized in the cloud and in the sea, was a *prelude* to Christian baptism. — But then, we also say, that *St. Paul* could not have fixed on an instance that could possibly

bly be more favourable to infant-baptism : Forasmuch as the *Jewish* parents with all their households, *infants* included, male and female, were certainly baptized together. And in like manner, as the *Jewish* parents, by that baptism, owned *Moses* as their leader, and his institution to be divine, so do Christian parents, when they first embrace the Christian doctrine, and are baptized with their households, own Christ to be their leader, and his institution to be divine. It follows, by undoubted consequence, from St. *Paul's* fixing on this baptism of the *Israelites* as a *prelude* to Christian baptism, that *infants* must be concerned in the Christian baptism. If this consequence be not fairly drawn, I despair of ever being able to draw one, or of seeing a *consequence* stand related to a *premise*.

And yet, upon the most impartial judgment I can form of Mr. *K.'s* opinions from his remarks, *infant-baptism* should, with him, be one of those corruptions of Christianity which make up the GRAND APOSTACY. He would represent it as so diametrically opposite to the Gospel-scheme, that no man can be a *Christian* who avows the practice. Neither can his arguments in defence of Christianity have the least weight.—But if so, I am astonished that the *Saviour* of men and his *Apostles*, who foresaw the several branches of the *grand apostacy*, and forewarned the Christians of them, should overlook this: even so, as to take no notice at all of it.—Though no one thing that relates to the corruptions of Christianity, has more generally-obtained, or has been practised for more

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centuries, perhaps, than infant-baptism. — Certainly the Spirit of God stands chargeable with a great omission, in giving no previous hint to the apostles, of this *notorious* and *universal* departure from the faith! — But, we find, *on the contrary*, that that same Spirit has been owning, comforting, and supporting of thousands, and thousands of thousands, who have brought their *infants* to Christ by baptism: And who have themselves been initiated by no other kind of baptism.

Herein this writer seems to have copied too closely after our Lord's disciples, who when the *Jew*-parents brought their infant-children to be blessed by him, were in a passion with them, and forbad them! No doubt, because the young children were not capable of being *discipled* or *taught* by their Master. See *Matth. xix. 13, 14.* comp. *Mark x. 13.* *Luke xviii. 15.* — They thought it quite ridiculous for them to bring *infants* to Christ, to have his blessing, *merely* because they were infants. Whether Mr. K. does not express the same temper, let him examine. I fear he does: And am well assured, that our Lord was *greatly displeased* at his disciples, or had *indignation* * towards them, on this account, and said, that of *such is the kingdom of heaven.* — And why may not Christian parents bring their children to Christ by baptism? They are as capable of having the *blessing* of Jesus as the *Jew*-children were. And if as capable of his blessing, why not of the *external ritual*, which initiates into, or puts under

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* *Ayavav* rendered *Luke xiii. 14.* *Indignation.*

der his patronage?—— And why did our Lord say, *of such is the kingdom of heaven*, if such are *disqualified* for an admission into that kingdom? —— Till a solution is fairly given to this question, the argument for infant-baptism must stand.——For, how do adult-baptizers say of infants, with Jesus, *of such is the kingdom of heaven*? ——

I shall make one more remark on Mr. K.'s performance; and in *p. 91.* having denied that what we call the *Abrahamic* covenant had any thing in it like a covenant. —And farther declared, that *circumcision* is never stiled the *seal* of the covenant, he adds, —— “but if it be-
“longed to the covenant of grace it was a seal
“not at all necessary; even to such as are al-
“lowed to have been really interested in that
“covenant, for all females are utterly ex-
“cluded.” — And again, “that infants are *safe*,
“and their privileges as entire without baptism,
“as one half of the *Jewish* nation was without
“circumcision.” And at *p. 92.* he says, “That
“circumcision only related to the peculiar im-
“munities of the race and descendants of *Abra-*
“*ham*. For did the great God, whose tender
“mercies are over all his works, enter into a
“covenant relation with the males only?”

I have largely considered the *Abrahamic* covenant, and proved it to be a covenant, and circumcision the seal †. And shall therefore take no notice of these unsupported assertions; would only make some remarks on his reasoning. And he
says,

† The Reader may see this argument in *Spanhemius's Dubia*, Part III. *p. 100.* *Circumcisio olim erat σφραγίς της διακρίσεως της πίστεως. Rom. iv. 11. et tamen administrata infantibus.*

says, 1. "If circumcision belonged to the covenant, "it was not at all necessary: For this reason, *viz.* "because all the females were necessarily excluded."—I answer, that the females being excluded the seal, does not at all render the seal *unnecessary*, if it be granted, that the seal did belong to the covenant; for females might, notwithstanding this, be interested in the same covenant. Mr. K. has himself shewn us how the *females* might be acknowledged, as entered into the same covenant with the males, by that baptism into *Moses*, in the cloud and in the sea, the *prelude* to *Christian baptism*. And only supposing with him, that circumcision related to the peculiar immunities of the race and descendants of *Abraham*, *females* might be, and actually were, *equally* interested in those peculiar immunities, tho' they had not the same seal applied. — I farther ask, why might not the *females* be included in that same covenant of which circumcision was the token or seal, though the seal was not applied to them, as well as be obliged by those precepts which were enjoined that people under the *male* character? Such as *Lev. xxv. 46. --- But over your BRETHREN the children of Israel, ye shall not rule with rigor.* Might they rule over the *females* with rigor? So *Deut. i. 16. Hear between your BRETHREN, and judge righteously between MAN and his BROTHER.* Did not this include the *female*, in the intention of the law, though *sisters* or *women* are not mentioned? *Chap. xv. 7. If there be among you a poor MAN, of one of thy BRETHREN, within any of the gates --- thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor BROTHER.* What, would

would not this law equally oblige a regard to a poor SISTER? ---- They were excluded the sign, but not the covenant. ---- They were considered as parties in the covenant, and many express laws shew them to be so, though they had not the seal. And as well might *Sarah* be said not to be included in the *Abrahamic* covenant, because she had not the covenant in her flesh, though the *promise* is made to her, as well as to *Abraham*. See *Gen. xvii. 15, 16.*

Publick covenants and *leagues* among men, have, in all nations and ages, had the *males* usually for the immediate contracting parties; though the benefits of such covenants have been *equally* intended for the females. And can it then be good reasoning in any, to assert, that because the token, sign, or seal of a covenant could *only* be in the flesh of the males, that therefore the females were necessarily *excluded* the covenant; of which circumcision was the seal? ---- Neither will it in the present case appear an *unnecessary* seal, because not applicable to the females; when we consider, that it was the *good pleasure* of the God of *Abraham*, that his covenant should continue in the flesh of the males; — and it lies upon Mr. K. to prove, that either the males or the females could have been secure of those *peculiar immunities* of the descendants of *Abraham*, without circumcision. ---

This gentleman asks, *2dly.* “ Whether the
“ great God, whose tender mercies are over all
“ his works, did enter into a covenant relation
“ only with the *males* ? ”

I know of no body that says he did, though the circumcision, applied only to the males, is called

called *God's covenant*, Gen. xvii. 10. And the token of it, ver. 11. and this is said to be a covenant in their flesh, for an everlasting covenant, ver. 13.

3dly. A most important conclusion is here made, viz. "*That the infants of Christians are as safe, and their privileges as entire without baptism, as one half of the Jewish nation was without circumcision.*"

However, Mr. K. may satisfy himself with this conclusion, I hope he does not design to draw it for any body else.—The conclusion has nothing on which it supports, but mere imagination; for the apostle *Paul* has observ'd, that *Christian baptism* has no such a distinct application, as *circumcision* had; but that *there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus*, Gal. iii. 28. which opposition to *circumcision*, will by no means admit of the above conclusion. For as *Christian baptism* stands opposed, it will not follow, that the infants of Christians are as *safe*, and their privileges as *entire* without baptism, as *one half* of the *Jewish nation* was without *circumcision*.----The apostle evidently *diminishes* the benefit of *circumcision*, which was applied to *Jew-male-infants only*, by asserting, that in *Christian baptism* there is *neither male nor female*. Would any one from hence venture to draw the above conclusion, if he was free from prejudice? *Christian parents* are not to apply the *distinguishing* rite to their children, but to treat them, as *all one in Christ Jesus* *.

What

* *Fœminas olim à circumcissione exclusit & incapacitas ad recipiendum signum, & mandatum Dei restrictum ad solos masculos. A baptismo neutro modo excluduntur, immo includuntur. Spanheim. Dub. Evang. Pars III. p. 100.*

What he means by *as safe* in this comparison, I do not well know. If he means, that Christian infants are as absolutely incapable of baptism, as the female-children of the *Jew* were of circumcision, and so *as safe*, I deny it.---- But the females among the *Jews* we have already observed, were *necessarily included* in that very covenant, of which circumcision was the token or seal; and therefore they are not to be considered as examples of our imitation; no such conclusion can be drawn ---- not any thing that will vindicate an *omission* of the baptismal rite to our infant-offspring. So that it cannot be made appear that the condition of our children is *as safe*, and their privileges as *entire* without baptism, as *one half* of the *Jewish* nation was without circumcision.----

The above remarks on Mr. *Killingworth's* tract, are, I hope, plain and just. I shall have no farther controversy with him. ---- What reflections he has made upon those *worthy* and *rational* defenders of Christianity, behoves him to review with seriousness. I heartily wish him a just discernment of the spirit of his performance.

What I have more to add in this *Introduction*, shall be some observations upon a text or two I have made use of in defending the argument for infant-baptism; ----- one is, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* St. Paul, appears to me, thus to have addressed the *Heathen converts*, in order to convince the parent, that *he* or *she* should by no means *desert* or *leave exposed* their tender offspring; [as was thought lawful among the

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the infidel-parents,] forasmuch as by their embracing Christianity they were to look upon their offspring as HOLY; *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* They were the offspring of parents, who were become the parts of an *holy nation*, or polity; in the language of St. Peter, first Epist. ii. 9. The Christian is *personally* holy: His body was the temple of the Holy Spirit, as he had the *charismata*; and this temple is to be occupied and animated by a spirit of truth and holiness; which is a *much more* important idea of its holiness, than that of the extraordinary gifts; and therefore, as he is to be holy *in body and in spirit*, his offspring are esteemed holy, as the *fruit* of his body. We may hence reckon it one of our Christian privileges, that our infant-children may be received along with us, by this initiating rite, into the Christian church. ---- And though some of our brethren may be under the same prejudices with our Lord's disciples, *Matth. xviii. 10.* and *despise* children, as not fit for a place with them; yet, as our Lord has reprov'd such contempt, by assuring us that the *angels* don't think *infants* beneath their charge; so we reckon them fit subjects of the grace of the gospel-constitution. *Infants*, surely, must be intended; for our Lord has added, that his condescension was yet greater than that of angels, as he came to save persons that were lost, *immoral* persons, *ver. 11.* persons of a more base rank than infants. Besides,

To dedicate infants to God by baptism, must have an apt tendency to preserve *purity of bodily converse* in Christian parents; for with what

propriety can a Christian-parent look upon *his* or *her* child as holy, who allowedly prostitutes his or her body, by impure and adulterous embraces? ---- The very act of dedication, or initiation must shock a mind, that has any sense of truth, conscious of such violations of the laws of purity!-----

Another text is, *Acts* iii. 39. *For the promise is to you and to your children.* ----

Against the sense I have given of this text it may be objected, that it immediately refers to the *charismata*, or miraculous gifts of the Spirit, which infants were not capable of receiving. See *ver.* 38.

Suppose it does, will any one say, that their infant-children were excluded the promise? Would not the promise be accomplished to them as they grew up to mature age? ---- I am apprehensive of no danger of the contrary being proved against me. But though the promise should be applied to the *charismata*, I am persuaded that the *blessings* of that constitution, attested and confirmed by the Holy Spirit, were a much nobler consideration, and a more cogent motive to men's repenting and embracing the gospel, than the extraordinary gifts themselves. And as the *promise* did undoubtedly intend, the perpetuating of those blessings which it contained, from generation to generation, so it could not but *include* their infant-offspring.

Another thing, which I have not noticed in the following *tracts*, is a passage in St. *Luke's* history of the *Acts* of the Apostles, *chap.* xix. 5. which some have understood as expressive of a

re-baptization of persons, who had received *John's* baptism.

And indeed from our rendering it should seem to have been so. For *Paul* meeting with a number of disciples at *Ephesus*, asks them if they had received the *Holy Spirit* since they believed? They answer, that they had not heard of any such effusion of the Spirit, to which he referred. He farther asks them, *unto, or into what they were baptized?* They answer, *unto, or into John's baptism?* Upon which *Paul* says, that *John* verily did baptize with the baptism of repentance, telling the people whom he baptized, that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on *Christ Jesus*.---- The baptism of *John* then, in *St. Paul's* sense, was a baptism into the faith of *Jesus*, as the coming *Messiah*. And yet, in our translation, it is added, *When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*—

This rendering is surely improper; for why should they be baptized *again* into the name of the *Lord Jesus*, who had, in *St. Paul's* judgment, been already baptized into the faith of the same *Jesus*?

There is no mention of any thing like a *re-baptization* of those who had received *John's* baptism, in any other place of the New Testament.—— But the contrary seems to be established, in that, the very disciples or apostles of our Lord could have had *no other* baptism than that of *John's* [unless they baptized one another:] And yet, they themselves baptized *more* than *John*, i. e. during our Lord's personal ministry. See *John* iv. beg.

It is therefore quite incongruous with the nature and design of *John's* baptism, [which was the *same* with the baptism of our Lord's disciples,] to suppose, that *St. Paul* could here admit of a *re-baptization*: Especially, as he has just allowed the baptism of *John* to be *valid*, in the plainest terms.

There must therefore be another rendering more just than our *English* translation; and that I chuse to express thus, "*But hearing they had been baptized * into the name of the Lord Jesus; and Paul laying his † hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.*" Thus the *Greek* text appears, to me, to be literally rendered. The reader may see more of this, in the reverend Dr. BENSON'S *history of the planting of the Christian Church*, Part II. p. 142. Note [b.]

We may observe, that here were a number of disciples, who had received *John's* baptism, and yet, had not heard of the *dispensation of the Spirit*, though it was about the year of Christ 54. And these men receive the miraculous gifts in consequence of that their baptism. No *re-baptization*, no invalidating the baptism of *John*. — Neither was the baptism of *John*, in the least, different from the baptism of our Lord's disciples, during our Lord's ministry, only in respect to time; his baptism requiring faith, in the *baptized adult*, into the approaching kingdom of the Messiah. The *baptism* of the apostles required faith in a Messiah already come. And as an evidence of it, they wrought miracles, which *John* did not.

* Ἀναβαλτες δε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου

† Καὶ ἐπιθεῖς

not. And the *Christian baptism* must now differ from both, as it initiates into a kingdom long since erected, and that is hastening towards its period; and differs likewise, as it is applied to *Gentile* as well as *Jew*.

And moreover, as these disciples which St. Paul found at *Ephesus*, about 12 men in number, might, with their families, have been baptized of *John* 20 years before this time when they received the Spirit; so, there is no impropriety in the application of the same rite to *infants*, who in less time may become capable of understanding the design and intention of baptism, *much better* than these disciples seem to have done.

Why the *adult baptizers* should so strenuously insist on baptism, *in their way*, being a necessary *pre-requisite* to Christian fellowship, is very unaccountable; not only for the reasons already offered in this *introduction*, but, because it is not in their power to prove that *all* the twelve apostles were such as had received baptism; and yet, at least eleven of these sat down with our Lord when he instituted the *memorial supper*.

It may be expected that I should have taken some notice of the *qualifications* of the BAPTIZER; inasmuch as many of our fellow-christians lay great stress upon it, ascertaining thereby the *validity* of baptism.—But forasmuch as no such controversy lies between the adult-baptizers and Protestant-dissenting-pædobaptists, I am excused from entering into a disquisition of this nature. We neither of us pretend to claim *priestly character*, upon the foot of an uninterrupted apostolic-conveyance, and must leave this to others, who chuse the *insuperable* task, — *Hoc opus, hic labor*

est. — We reckon, that the reasoning of the apostle about baptism, 1 Cor. i. 14. will not oblige us to consider a *qualification* for baptizing, does depend on the proof of an uninterrupted conveyance of sacerdotal powers from the apostles; — but rather conclude, that as every society of Christians have a natural right of chusing, and a power of ordaining or appointing their own ministers, that all such chosen persons are properly qualified for administering the sacraments; — and that by making the New Testament their rule, the *validity* of such ministrations can only take place. This we reckon a plain, easy, and short way of determining about the qualification of the *baptizer*, and the validity of baptism; for this *validity* can never depend, we imagine, on such *credentials*, as in the nature of the thing are impossible to be produced. —

To draw towards a conclusion, we should be very careful, whilst we are pleading for the religious observance of a positive institution, that we do not weaken its force, by placing it in any false point of view, or by raising a superstructure upon it, disproportionate to its basis. —

And we need be under no fear or terror about the interests of Christianity, or the honour of Christ's kingdom, whilst we are reproofing all *bigotry* and *uncharitableness*; whilst we are recommending *good temper*, *unity*, *concord*! — and *receiving one another in love*. — For it is the *spirit and temper* of Christianity that must recommend the *institution* to mankind, and not the degree of zeal, or heat of temper expressed for any positive institution, rite, or mode of worship whatsoever.

And

And I might here add, that the want of charity, brotherly love, and mutual forbearance among Protestants of all denominations and parties in matters of speculation, or in those points of doctrine wherein good men may differ, is just matter of lamentation, and what loudly calls for a speedy redress.

That angry spirit, that uncharitableness and bigotry which men have discovered, in their contentions, particularly about positive rites, has made many persons very *indifferent* about them; even so far as to call in question their *fitness*. — With *some* likewise, baptism has been reckoned to have been obligatory no longer than in the first spread of Christianity, except on the conversion of an *infidel*. Whereas it seems as reasonable that some *rite* should initiate, and so distinguish the subjects or members of Christ's kingdom in one age as in another, *i. e.* if we allow that it remains a *distinct* polity or kingdom, which has its *distinct* privileges. This will vindicate the application of a rite of *initiation*. In like manner the *supper* is a constant, open commemoration of Christ's death, attended with a profession of mens looking for his *second coming*. Both the *rites* are *significative*, and have an apt tendency to keep alive a *grateful, religious* sense of the dominion of an invisible, ascended Lord. This *end* is plainly answered by initiating grown persons and infants by baptism. And though the infant-child of an Heathen or of a Christian, is undoubtedly the care of Heaven without baptism; yet it does not follow, that a Christian parent, who is convinced of the reasonableness of applying baptism to his child, will be very safe in his

his conduct if he omit it: Since a religious respect is due to *Jesus* from all such Christian parents: which respect is very fitly expressed by baptizing their infant-children in his name. And we truly thus assert his dominion [a great end of the institution of the positive rites,] though the subject of baptism is not sensible of it.

Finally, To neglect positive rites is surely to weaken the external testimony of *reverence* and *gratitude*, which is due to the exalted *Jesus*. And this is too apparent from its generally abating and cooling the zeal and fervor of mens minds for all other public acts of homage. — This is one way in which *infidelity* insinuates itself; and *vice* becomes more bold and daring! But whilst men, who should by their spirits and lives, in their writings and actions recommend Christianity, *on the contrary*, for want of due reverence to the *authority* of *Jesus*, they are disgracing the very name, and exposing the most rational and friendly religion in all the world to reproach! — Nor can the *life* of religion recover itself, till men more universally make the Scriptures the fountain of their religious knowledge; and from a careful study of them form their own judgments and practice: Till men are satisfied with judging for themselves, without daring to make their own sentiments a standard for others: Till *charity* is better understood, and more exercised: — For where charity has the fullest empire, there religion has her throne: And where the rights of conscience or private judgment are invaded, *imposture*, and not *religion*, sways the sceptre.

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THE
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Occasioned by an

A N S W E R

To a late TREATISE, on

The Subjects and Mode of Baptism.

WHEREIN

This *Respondent's* conclusive Arguments are shewn to have
no Foundation.

John's baptizing in *Rivers* accounted for.

And his baptizing in them must be by *sprinkling*, and not by
plunging, if he was guided by Scripture-Authority.

WITH A

P O S T S C R I P T,

WHEREIN

Some Remarks are made on *Dr. GALE's* Arguments for *plunging*,
from the *sacramental* Sense of the Word βαπτίζω.

*Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh
you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear,
or with reverence of your maker.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for M. COOPER, in *Pater-noster-row*; and for R.
KING, in *Fore-street*. MDCCXLIII.

(Price Six-Pence.)

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T H E

INTRODUCTION.

*A*N apology for the making public these papers, is no way necessary : since we have as undoubted a right to defend our practice of baptizing infants, and of baptizing by sprinkling, from the light in which we see the reasonableness and propriety of such practice, as the anabaptists have to make such practice the subject of their defence ; and much more than they have of their raillery, either from the pulpit or the press.

The writer which I have to do with is anonymous, as well as myself—he has truly made very high pretences, which could he defend, all advocates for infant-baptism would have great reason from henceforth to keep silence, and to be dumb before this writer.

Whether he has such occasion of boasting, must be left to the judgment of every impartial reader. In the mean time, it could be wish'd, that the anabaptists would cease their reproachful language ; which surely they would, if they did but allow, that infant-baptizers have some degree of thought and reflection ; some impartiality in their reasonings on the subject ; and some share of integrity in their continuing the practice.

In all controversy, besides a reverence of God, a deference is due to the understandings of one
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another.

another. But where men triumph as if they were the only Christians, and as if wisdom must certainly die with them, this deference is certainly wanting—and men become unrighteously zealous.

The anabaptists have allowed that holy scripture should be our guide, and should be preferr'd to all other authority——what I have offered concerning John's baptizing, I am humbly of opinion, is the plainest account we can draw from thence——tho' I know not of any writer who has made use of it, in any such light in which I have placed it——

Why I have called this, a CHALLENGE, will appear by that time the Reader has cast his eye over the following pages.

In one word, my temptation to the publishing of these papers, was, the hopes I indulg'd of shortning the controversy: or, at least, of allaying the force of bigotry: and thereby becoming the means of uniting men more closely, in the bond charity.

If any severity appears, an unsufferable confidence, in the writer, with which I have to do, has made it justifiable.——What the writer he is answering, has deserved from him, I cannot tell, since I have not yet seen the treatise on the subjects and mode of baptism.

I therefore proceed to single out one or two of the most bold and conclusive passages in this answer, which are levell'd at the practice of infant-baptising.

T H E

T H E CHALLENGE.

TH E ANSWER to a treatise *on the subjects and mode of baptism*, seems to express great assurance; as in pages 16, 17, where it says, “ here lies
 “ the main stress of the dispute between the
 “ pædo-baptists and us, as to the subjects of
 “ this ordinance; we maintain that there is
 “ no warrantable connexion, between circum-
 “ cising infants of old in the *Jewish* church,
 “ and baptizing of them in the christian church;
 “ and they with all their skill have never been
 “ able to prove it. There are indeed so many
 “ *absurdities and inconsistencies* in the way, that
 “ they will find it *impossible* ever to remove
 “ them.”

To support this, under his *first* head of argument, he says, that after the omission of that positive rite, *circumcision*, during the *Israelites* journeyings thro’ the wilderness, “ that
 “ *Joshua* did not examine, who was religious,
 “ or who was not, of the promiscuous mul-
 “ titude ; but he circumcised all the males a-
 “ mong the people, without exception or dis-
 “ tinction. But pray how were the adult de-
 “ scendants of those very people treated, when

The CHALLENGE.

“ they came to offer themselves to *John*, as
 “ candidates for baptism? they were *rejected*
 “ *with* ABHORRENCE, as a *generation of vi-*
 “ *pers*. The dispensation was going to be
 “ changed, and both the ordinance, and the
 “ subjects of it were going to be changed like-
 “ wise.”

To reply, it ill becomes an *anabaptist* to coin scripture, or make it speak his *own sense*, when there is not any thing in the *text* to support it: since he will allow of no *conclusions*, or *deductions*, tho’ drawn from very probable appearances, where the *letter* is not express, as in the case of the baptizing of infants.—I ask then, who told this writer that *John rejected any with abhorrence*, who came to be baptized of him? The *text* says no such thing, see *Matt. iii. 7, 13.* the place he refers us to: but the *contrary* of this appears to be the truth, “for *John* asks
 “ them, who had warned them, *a generation*
 “ *of vipers*, to fly from the wrath to come?
 “ and he bids them *bring forth fruits meet for*
 “ *repentance*; declaring the necessity of their
 “ doing so, since he did indeed baptize *with*
 “ *water unto repentance*; but if they were not
 “ found true penitents, the *Messiah*, into whose
 “ kingdom he was baptizing them, would
 “ come with his *winnowing fan*, and separate
 “ the *chaff* from the *wheat*.”—I dare refer this to any unprejudiced man’s judgment, as the manifest, unforced representation of *John’s* conduct and doctrine.—The *separating work*, *John* expressly disclaims, he pretends not to use the *winnowing fan*, tho’ this *writer* is sure
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The CHALLENGE.

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he did, ay, that he discriminated and rejected with *abhorrence* persons of a vicious character. — *John* says, the discrimination will be made by the *Messiah's fan*, with which *he will thoroughly purge his floor*—Nevertheless this writer roundly asserts, that tho' "*Joshua* did not stand to examine who was religious, and who was not, of the promiscuous multitude, but he circumcised without exception; yet now the dispensation was changed, and both the ordinance and the subjects of it, changed likewise, for *John* actually rejected with abhorrence *a generation of vipers.*"

How blind are men, when afraid of losing the importance of a *peculiar mode*, by which they themselves are distinguish'd? more especially, when the *rite* itself, is represented as being applied by *John*, and our Lord's apostles, where *virtuous, moral* character was wanting, as was their use of the *baptismal* rite, 'tho this writer has said, that *John rejected such with abhorrence.*

Nor surely can he have the front to tell us, that *he* and his *brethren* baptize none but virtuous persons, or that they can *discriminate* characters——But if they cannot, tho' *John* had done so, it would not thence follow, that they are capable of being baptizers *like him*——and if vicious, immoral persons are baptized by them, surely *infants*, are, in a moral sense, as fit subjects of baptism, as *such* grown persons can possibly be? for tho' INFANTS cannot make any profession, they are secure from making an *hypocritical, lying profession*, which immoral

moral men fail not to do, at their baptism. The *prophanation*, or *prostitution* of the ordinance, then, in a moral view of it, must be greater and much more apparent, when *vitious* and *nocent grown persons*, are allowed to be the subjects of baptism, than when it is applied to *innocent infants*.

But this writer may know, that there are those who have defended baptism, upon the *sacred usage* of water-baptism among the *Jews*; and more particularly, as they initiated *proselytes*, with their *infant children* into their religion by *water baptism**, which accounts for *John's* using a *rite* among a people, who well knew its intention, and saw the propriety of it. Persons thus baptized, they call'd *new born* persons, which occasioned our Lord to upbraid *Nicodemus*, who was a *master in Israel*, and yet did not understand him, when told, that he must be *born again* of water, and of the spirit. *John* iii. 5, 10.

Moreover, had *John* discriminated, or baptized none but virtuous persons, we might have expected to have read of large multitudes receiving the *Messiah's* kingdom; since it is expressly said, *that Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were baptized of John, in Jordan, confessing their sins*, Matt. iii. 5, 6. and yet, but *few* of this multitude received the doctrine of *Jesus*, tho' *John* had recommended to them, as he baptized them, to *repent*, and *reform their manners*, in order that they might be *fit* for the benefits of the *Messiah's* kingdom.

Another

* See the plea for infants, and the Appendix.

Another *terrifying blow* is aimed to be given to *infant-baptism*, page 18. where this *answerer* says, “ here is a full and fair solution to that
 “ mighty question, urged by *almost all writers*
 “ on this point, *viz.* whether God has aboli-
 “ shed his gracious covenant so far as it con-
 “ cerns the infant children of his people ? and
 “ where he has signified a repeal of this their
 “ privilege ? Here is the question in its full
 “ force and strength, and the answer is ready
 “ and plain ; *they were all left out at this junc-*
 “ *ture*, upon the change of the dispensation,
 “ *and for ever afterwards* ; and yet their sal-
 “ vation is as secure as it was before : for if
 “ there was any other covenant made, since
 “ the abolition of circumcision, as an outward
 “ sign, which is to be applied to infants, let it
 “ be produc’d, or else it is high time to have
 “ done *declaiming upon an imaginary covenant*,
 “ no where to be found in the gospel.”

To assert, *that the infant children of God's people were left out at this juncture, upon the change of this dispensation, and ever afterwards*, has something of the spirit of *Don Quixotism* in it : the man thinks he has been performing mighty exploits, when his atchievements are nothing more than a few flourishes of *knight-errantry*——for surely *scripture authority* could never have been levell'd with more force and confidence, than he has play'd off his *imagination*.

Did ever any rational defender of infant baptism once pretend, that any *new covenant* was made since the *abolition* of circumcision ?—It
 does

does not appear that circumcision was abolished 'till after our Lord had appeared as the *promised seed*, which promise was made to *Abraham*, so that the *gospel covenant*, the *new covenant*, was made 433 years before the law, *Gal. iii. 17.* and is the διαθήκη, *testamentum*, which signifies a testament, or *covenant*, throughout the writings of the old and new testament*—and not the συνθήκη *compactus*, which was the sign of a *common agreement between several men. Signum partibus commune.*—So that God is the testator, or *proper single author* of this new covenant, see *Acts iii. 25* the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto *Abraham*, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; της διαθήκης—The new testament or covenant in Christ's blood, *Matt. xxvi. 28.*—And this is the covenant that God makes with the house of *Israel*, *I will put my laws into their mind*, so *Heb. viii. 10.*

And the same word stands for the *appointing* for us a kingdom. *Luke xxii. 29.* So it is that *Zacharias* calls it his, i. e. *God's covenant*; *Luke i. 72, 73.* to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember *HIS* holy covenant, the oath which *HE* swore to our father *Abraham*.

Thus evident is it, that the *new covenant* was before the abolition of circumcision, and not only so, but that it requires not the authority of *more than one* to make it a covenant in the sacred language; but properly intends a *promise*. [N.B. It may be called *new*, from its

* Foedus, pactum: passim in scriptis vet. et nov. test. Scapula.

publication by *Jesus*, as the *law of charity*, is call'd a *new commandment*, see *John xiii. 34.*] The same word is used for *covenant* by the *septuagint*, *Gen. xvii. 2.* and *Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.* which this *writer* acknowledges to have understood the *Jewish Idioms**.

The reason why I have mentioned this, is, *not only* to shew, that the *gospel covenant* was made with *Abraham*, [tho' the full publication of its *blessed* contents was by the *Messiah* himself:] But that the *gospel covenant* made with *Abraham*, in its true notion, does import *favour* and *grace* to man, as contain'd in a *promise*; by which God bound himself to performance: and respecting which, man was more properly the *subject* of the *favour* and *grace*, than, as in human covenants, a *contracting party*.

Hence the *infants* of *Abraham*, nay, his infant descendants in all generations, are properly acknowledged to be the *subjects* of this covenant, even as fit subjects as grown persons: since neither the one nor the other are *contracting parties*, as in *human covenants*—but *subjects of favour*; or as it were, *legatees* or *recipients* of the benefits of this covenant——for thus it stands explained by *St. Paul*, *viz. as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*, 1 Cor. xv. 22——but infants are as properly among the ALL that die in *Adam*, as grown persons are; therefore as proper subjects of this *new covenant* as they.——*Infants*, whilst subject to *death*, must be the proper subjects of this covenant; and as such, have a title to the *same rite*,
C by

by which men were *first initiated* with them into the kingdom of *Jesus*, upon the *publication* of this covenant. The *initiating rite* is that of *baptismal water*, and has comported well with the *publication* of this grace, by which the *partition wall* is broken down, or which makes no difference of *male* or *female*, of *Greek* or *Jew*, of *bond* or *free*, Gal. iii. 28.

The *Sneer* then has no more place, which used to be brandished with great freedom, on account of our regarding infants, as the *subjects of a covenant*.—Since it is a false insinuation that grown persons are *contracting parties* in this *new covenant*; which is, in its own nature, a *promise*; a promise confir'md and established by an *oath*, even the *oath* of God.

It is that promise, or covenant, which St. *Peter* says, was made to the *Jews*, and to their *children*, and to *all afar off*, Acts ii. 39. *the blessing of ABRAHAM that was to come upon the Gentiles*, and which has a much better security than a *man's covenant*, Gal. iii. 14.

I might here mention the word used for covenant, the new covenant, by the sacred historians, as in use among the *Greeks* for a *will* or *testament*; for it is observed that *Isæus*, when he mentions any to succeed by *gift and will*, *κατα δωση και κατα διαθεση*, he opposes these to *succession*, *κατα γνησιν*, by natural right*.

So that men cannot be *contracting parties* in this, *διαθηκη*, *testament*, or *covenant*, consider'd as a *promise of life*, Gal. iii. 21. But men, who are under the *publication* of this covenant, may

* *Isæus hæred. Cleonymi.*

The CHALLENGE. II

be initiated, or acknowledged the subjects of it in infancy, as well as be specified *legatees* in the testament or covenant itself.

Notwithstanding this, they are obliged by the tenour of this covenant, to put on *moral character*, as they grow up and are capable of it ; for the language of men, who understand the covenant is, *that having this hope in him, we purify ourselves, as he is pure, i John iii. 3.* or according to St. Paul, having this covenant, or these promises, *we are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh, and of spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.*

The covenant nevertheless, as exhibiting the gift of eternal life, supposes the bequest to be of free grace! for *herein is love, not that we loved God, and so were contracting parties in this gracious covenant, but that he first loved us, 1 John iv. 19.*

Men are not therefore considered in this covenant, as creatures already qualified, or duly dispos'd for the blessing : but the *declaration* of divine love and grace, stretched out to embrace the whole human family, is intended to *engage* men, to *draw* and *excite* them to put on virtuous and holy character — To walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called——— *otherwise*, the grace of this covenant will not take effect, the intention of it will not be *answered* or *established*.

This was the case with regard to that covenant, by which God promis'd *Canaan* to the descendants of *Abraham*, *Deut. viii. 18, 19.* and so it is with respect to that covenant or promise

made to him of the *blessing of the Messiah*—— Children initiated into this covenant, are not to continue children, but as they grow up are to be instructed in the nature and end of that covenant which gave *him to the people*——they must consider that in him the FOUNDATION OF GOD stands sure, having this *seal, mark, or impression* upon it, *viz. that the Lord knows them that are his*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Death with all its direful outrage, in all its ruins, has not been able to make such an *eracement* of personal distinctions, as to hinder his eye from discriminating and distinguishing——The design for which Christ should die, was signified to the *first pair*; and therefore, as the intention of divine grace, *in raising the dead*, was intimated so early, we may be assured, that all the *blendings and confusions*, that have happened by the universal sweep of death, in every generation, cannot *obstruct* or *hinder* the perception of his penetrating eye; *the Lord knows them that are his*, throughout the regions of the dead——accordingly, has he appointed his son to raise *all that have died in Adam*.

Is it not then quite rational, or highly fit that this SURE FOUNDATION should be acknowledged in the *extensiveness of it*, by a solemn rite applied to our *infant children*, as subjects within the compass of this grace and mercy?

This is fit, notwithstanding it is incumbent upon them, if they grow up, as it was incumbent on *John's* disciples, to *bring forth fruits, meet for such an holy dispensation*, or having
been

been devoted to God in Christ, they are indispensably obliged to *depart from all iniquity*.— If they give into temptation, they must *repent and convert*, that so their *sins may be blotted out*, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

For as those men, who were baptized of *John*, and called *a generation of vipers*, cannot be supposed to have put on virtuous moral character, when he baptized them, *no more* than infants; yet this hinders not, but that both the *one*, and the *other*, are afterwards obliged to do it, as they discern the nature of the constitution, which strictly demands PURITY both of heart and life.

Whether it does now appear, that this *writer* had any reason or foundation for his bold assertion, “ that, the infant children of God’s people *were left out*, of his gracious covenant, “ *at this juncture*, viz. at *John’s* baptizing, “ and ever afterwards.” Whether he has any authority to support him, I leave to the consideration of every unprejudic’d reader.

However, every man who knows what *Christian charity*, or even what *common decency* and *good manners* mean, will certainly allow us to baptize our infant children, without *insulting* us, when we tell them, that we are convinced that *water* was [all thro’ the *Jewish theocracy*] made use of, *as a symbol of purity*——and that *John* came making use of water, as what had never been denied a *purifying use* to the *Jews*, and to their infant offspring——and that, we see no reason to conclude that the *infant children*

dren of God's people were *left out* at this juncture ; for as much as neither *John* has told us so, nor *Jesus Christ*, nor any of his *apostles*.

Nor do I see how we shall be tempted to swallow this confident assertion of this *writer's*, unless we could suppose, that *John* peevishly treated infants *as a generation of vipers*, because he could not teach them before he baptized them.—Or, unless we should understand our Lord as intimating this LEAVING OUT, by his taking such an *affectionate tender* notice of the infant children of such *Jews* who sought his blessing ; whom accordingly he took up in his arms, and blessed them ; and *besides this*, presented them to his disciples, as standards of *humility*, and of *freedom* from guile and hypocrisy. Or, unless we should think that because the apostles declared the *whole household* should be saved on account of the faith of its *head*, that therefore, *the infant children of God's people*, had been *left out at this juncture*, viz. when *John* came baptizing with water—Or, because *whole households* were baptized, *ergo*, infants were *left out* at this juncture—Or, *once more*, because the apostle *Paul* declares the infants of converted heathens to be *holy*, i. e. no longer unclean—unless we may conclude the *leaving out* of infants from some of these considerations, we have no better authority, than the SAY so of this extravagantly modest writer.

But had infants been *left out*, or excluded a right to some *symbol*, by which they are acknowledged *legatees*, or *subjects* of the grace of this covenant, we might very justly have expected

ted some notice of it in the revelation——and that they, who declared this leaving out, should have given the converted *Jewish parents*, some reconciling reasons for such an *act of exclusion*.

——That they would have told them, why they had not admission to one *common rite* with them; tho' *baptismal water* had been all along in use with them, as a *symbol of purity*.

But it seems I must persuade myself that the *Jews*, [tho' as tenacious as any people of every privilege, or of what they esteemed so.] did *tamely*, and without making the least noise, submit to this *leaving out* of their children. Or, if any *controversy* did arise about it, it was of *too trifling* a nature, to have any notice took of it, tho' *much less* affairs are recorded.——these unreasonable things are unmercifully demanded of us.

Should we then conclude, that *infant children* were *left out at this juncture*, from what this *writer* has said, it would be to conclude *implicitly*, or like an *Hobbs*, when dying, to take a *leap in the dark*——but surely it is not worth our while, thus to gratify those, who have taken it into their heads, to make a positive *rite*, applied in such a *mode*, the mark or test of a *consistent protestant*; and the *only sure evidence* of a judicious man's *sincerity*.

Neither are we obliged to thank this writer, for admitting our *infant children*, to be as *secure of salvation as before*.——we well know, without that *sneer*, that baptism is no security of salvation, either to *them*, or to any *adult* persons. It cannot, in its own nature. *Bap-*
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tism does not now save us.——but forasmuch as we retain as great an affection to our infant-offspring, as our *fore-fathers*, under past dispensations, did to theirs ; and are persuaded that our baptizing them, is a practice worthy of our *christian character*, as we thereby solemnly dedicate them to God in Christ, by the *same rite*, by which the *first christian* parents were initiated and their households we think ourselves justified in thus owning them, as *the members of Christ's body*,——or in thus *distinguishing* them from the offspring of *infidels* and *Jews*.

“ And hereupon we CHALLENGE any
 “ of you *Gentlemen* of the *anabaptist persuasion*,
 “ to shew us how the *ridicule* does fasten upon
 “ us, on account of our *sprinkling* infants, in
 “ acknowledgement of their being made in
 “ *God's image*, designed for his service, and as
 “ *actually concerned* in the *benefits* or *ends* of
 “ Christ's death.——Demonstrate to us, if
 “ you can, how the *ridicule* does fasten upon
 “ us, or that the action is as *unfit, irrational,*
 “ and *stupid* as the SPRINKLING OF A KIT-
 “ TEN, [a *reproachful expression*, known a-
 “ mong some of you]——if you can do this,
 “ we will yield to the force of evidence, and
 “ openly declare our infatuation and folly.”
 “Till this done, use your own *liberty* of refusing
 baptism to your infants ; we judge you not,
 nor dare we throw any unchristian censures
 upon you—and pray give us leave, we demand
 it, we will take it, *viz.* to assert our right of
private judgment, as well as you, both as to
 the

the *subjects* to whom we apply baptism, and as to the mode of it.

For even as to the *MODE*, tho' you seem to be very *sanguine* about it—I shall take the liberty of remarking a *few* things concerning it: in doing of which, I hope to give some *very probable* account from scripture, why *John* baptized in rivers; and likewise shew, that his baptizing *there* could not be by *dipping*, or *plunging*, but must be by *sprinkling* or *pouring*.

It is true, the *anabaptists* will have it, that βαπτίζω, must, in its proper sense, signify to *plunge all over in water**.

Against

* The *anabaptists* have triumph'd much, from an imagination that the word βαπτίζω, in its proper signification, denotes a *total immersion*; notwithstanding its *common signification*, as used by the *Septuagint*, and by the evangelists and apostles, intends a *partial application* of water, which has been largely shewn by Mr. *William Walker*, in his *doctrine of baptisms*, London, printed 1678. who among other things has shewn, “ that had our Lord designed strictly a *total immersion* by the word, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. he might have “ used words of *lesser latitude*, and which could not have “ been capable of signifying *less* than *plunging*, such as “ καταβυθίζω, καταποντίζω, καταδύω or καταδυα, not “ to say δυνάω and βυθίζω.

“ That the διαφορῆς βαπτισμοῖς, mentioned *Heb.* ix. 10. “ must intend different *kinds* or *sorts* of baptisms, and not “ the *number* of them, does appear from the use of the word, “ *Lev.* xix. 19. *Deut.* xxii. 9. *Dan.* vii. 7. by the *Sept.*— “ and *Rom.* xii. 6. in the *new testament*—So that βαπτίζω, “ as properly signified any *partial washing*, as it did *dipping*, “ which is plain from *David's baptizing* his bed with tears, “ *Pf.* vi. 6. and from the priest's *baptizing* his finger in the “ blood, *Lev.* xiv. 16. *et alibi.* and the stump of the tree; “ *Dan.* iv. 5. being *baptized* with the dew of heaven. And used “ frequently, if not always by the *new testament* writers “ for a *partial application* of water——nay, even when the “ verb is compounded with the preposition ἐν, it then signi-

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“ *hie*

Against this, I would observe, that the most important *baptisms* or *purifications* among the *Jews*, had ever been those which were applied by *sprinkling* and *pouring*.—So, in that *endemic* distemper, that common uncleanness among them, *viz.* the *leprosy*; under this, the *leper* was to have water *sprinkled* on him seven times, and then the priest was to pronounce him *clean*, *Lev.* xiv. 7.

After this indeed, we are told, that the man was to *wash* his cloaths, and *shave* off his hair, and

“fies a *partial* dipping, *Matt.* xxvi. 23. unless you will say, “that he that *dipped* his hand with our Lord in the dish, “*plunged* it all over in the liquor or gravy. But baptizing “into the dish his hand, was no more than putting in a “*thumb and finger*, and that too if done with decency, to “be as little moist as possible——and yet it is, *εμβαλεις.*”

The confidence of this writer, *as to plunging*, would certainly be humbled, could he attend without prejudice to that performance——

And as to the *subjects*, tho' this *answerer* says, p. 22. that the *infants of christians*, have no better title to *ordinances*, than the *infants of others*, 'till they come to believe——and calls it *officious* to affix a seal to them, p. 23. yet, he surely never considered, that all polite and civiliz'd nations, in every age have had some solemn way of dedicating their infants to their deities. Even the *ancient Canaanites*, (before the children of *Israel* possessed the land) had a custom of presenting their *infant children* to *Molech*. see *Lev.* xviii. 21. comp. *Deut.* xviii. 10.——the manner of doing this, *Ainsworth* says, is not now certainly known; but it is thought to have been these two ways, *viz.* “some were burnt to death, the parents “being persuaded, that by this sacrifice, the rest of their “children should be delivered from death; and that they “themselves should prosper for it all the days of their lives; “others of their children were only made to pass between “two fires, for a sign of consecration.” And the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, it has been observ'd, had *rites of dedication* of their infant offspring.——The practice then is so far from being *absurd*, that it seems perfectly agreeable to the voice of nature.

The CHALLENGE.

19

and *wash* his flesh in water, v. 9. But then, this was the part incumbent upon himself—the priest was first to *sprinkle* him seven times, and then pronounce him *clean*. And it was manifestly after this, that the man was to shave and *wash* himself—

So likewise, the priest was to *pour* oyl on his head, before he made the *atonement*, v. 18. —

To the same purpose, we read of *Moses's* taking the blood of the covenant, and *sprinkling* it on the people, *Exod.* xxiv. 8. in allusion to which, the *sprinkling of the blood of Christ*, is mentioned by *St. Peter*, 1 *ep.* i. 2. and by *St. Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *ch.* ix. 19, 20. and so *all things* that were purged with blood, were purged only by the *sprinkling* of it upon them. Why then, should water be now applied by *immersion* only, even that *water* which refers to the *blood of sprinkling*? this does not seem capable of any full defence; since there appears so great an impropriety in the *sign* or *symbol* of the thing *signified*.

But again, the *water of purification* was to be *sprinkled* on him that touched the *dead body* of any man that was dead, see *Numb.* xix. It was to be *sprinkled* upon the unclean. — and altho' he that had been thus *sprinkled*, was obliged on the seventh day to *purify* or *wash* himself; yet, it appears, that the purification which he received from the priest, was by *sprinkling*. No water was applied by the priest for his purification, by *dipping* or *plunging*, but only by *sprinkling*——and this seems to be the whole of the *water purification*, which the unclean

received from the priest ; examine *Lev. xiv.* and *Numb. xix.* In *Numb. xix. 6.* he that is called a *clean man*, *Ainsworth* has observed, that the *targum of Jonathan* renders a priest. And he farther observes, that the *water of separation*, is by the *Greek* and *Chaldee* reckoned, *the water of sprinkling**——but if the *water of separation* was no other than the *water of sprinkling*, we may certainly with the utmost propriety, vindicate a *like use* of water, when the most clear view of the *blood of sprinkling* is exhibited.

Hence I would infer, that should we be allowed to look both upon the *sprinkling*, and the *bathing* of the unclean, as *typical* or *figurative* for the time then present, *Heb. ix. 9.* we should then conclude, that *our sprinkling of infants* with water does properly *precede* that washing, that cleansing of themselves, which is expressive of a *pure and holy life* ; and agrees with the *manner* in which *purifying water*, or the *water of separation* had been ever used, as it did precede the unclean *washing* and *bathing* themselves.—So *John's* baptizing a *generation of vipers*, and bidding them go and wash themselves, or bring forth fruits *meet* for repentance, greatly confirms the observation.

I again infer, that since this appears to have been the *law* of the priests, in their using the *baptismal water*, viz. to apply it *only* by *sprinkling*, as the *water of separation* ; it follows that the supposition of *John's* using the *water of Jordan* no otherwise, will be in perfect consisten-

* See his Notes on *Numb. xix. 13.*

cy or harmony.—This inference is but rational, since it cannot be made appear that *John* did ever plunge any one person, whom he baptized : and on the other hand, *John's* being of the *race of the priests*, and having begun his public ministrations in conformity to the law of the priests, viz. at 30 years of age, we may rationally conclude that he used the *separating water* as the priests had always used it, viz. by *sprinkling*: and that he recommended the *thorough washing* or *cleaning* to themselves. And with this the face of his history fully agrees.

Especially, ought we to be satisfied, in this our opinion about baptismal water, when we add, the reason why *John* baptized in rivers.

If we attend to the *custom*, and *law* of the ancient priests, we find, that they were obliged to take *two birds* alive and clean, and *cedar wood*, and *scarlet* and *byssop*, and kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel, over RUNNING WATER, see *Lev. xiv. 5, 6.* which *rituals* attending the *water of separation*, were very consistently laid aside by *John*, who was introducing a more spiritual and moral dispensation, or proclaiming the approach of it. It would not then have been so proper, that *John* should use the *separating water*, with all these *Jewish rituals* belonging to it, when he was baptizing into a *new* state and kingdom— or when he appeared without any of the *ornaments* of the priests, in the greatest simplicity of dress and behaviour.

Yet, we may very rationally conclude, that he chose RIVERS to baptize in, *rather* than *standing waters*, as his doing so, had the most manifest

manifest conformity to that repeatedly strict injunction of the *water of separation* or *sprinkling*, being no other than *running water*. See *Lev. xiv. 5, 6, 50, 51, 52. xv. 13. Numb. xix. 17.* Observe, *running water* was called *living water*, because of its *continual motion*,—which well prefigured that water which *springeth up unto eternal life*, *John iv. 10, 14.*

And baptizing in *running* or *living* waters, better agreed with the strong way in which the *Jews* had been use to image to themselves, the *all sufficiency* of God, *Jer. ii. 13. the fountain of living waters*; comp. *ch. xviii. 13.*—called also the *fountain of life*, from whence run *rivers of pleasure*, *Pf. xxxvi. 8, 9.*

And *gospel times*, the *blessedness* of them is represented by *pouring water* upon him that is *thirsty*, *Is. xlv. 3.*—and by *sprinkling clean water* upon men, *Ezek. xxxvi. 25.*—and by *living waters* going out of *Jerusalem*, *Zeck. xiv. 8.*

I mention these places to shew, the great idea they were used to form, of *running* or *living* waters. So that as the *water of separation*, was never to be any other than *running* water, we may cease wondering, or being at a loss to know, why *JOHN* came baptizing in *Jordan*——here lay his authority for so baptizing——which, in my humble opinion, seems to be a *much clearer* way of accounting for *John's* chusing *much waters*, or *rivers of water* to baptize in, than that he chose them for the *conveniency of plunging*; since it plainly appears, that *bathing, dipping, or plunging* was
never

never the office of the priest ——— It was not his way of using the *water of separation*, the *running water*, but it was the proper business and duty of the unclean to *wash* and *bathe* themselves.

To which usage of water, I cannot but think St. Paul alludes, when he describes the Christian as drawing near to God, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, *having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water*, Heb. x. 22. which *washing of the body with pure water*, seems to intend, those *habits of purity*, by which he was to hold fast the profession of his *hope* (ἐλπίδος) without wavering. ——— And the *sprinkling of the heart*, from an evil conscience, will well agree with their being *sprinkled with the water of separation*, at their first embracing the holy doctrine of Jesus.

In one word, as the Jews had ever been used to understand *sprinkling* to be the office of the priest, and this *washing of the body* to be the office of the unclean person himself; it is not reasonable to suppose, that such a *reverse* use or change of the application of water, as the *plunging baptizers* suppose, could have been introduced, without the least intimation given of such change ——— it follows, that John must have *sprinkled*, and not *plunged*, when he came baptizing in Jordan.

It is now expected of the *plunging baptizers*, who profess to be governed in their practice by *scripture authority*, that they shew us a plainer, more express, and conclusive account of *water baptism*,

baptism, as practised by *John*, than is here given. Or else, that they allow us to have, *at least*, as good a foundation for continuing our practice of *sprinkling*, as they can have for *plunging*—and before they expect that we give up *infants* right to baptism, they must give us some better reason by far, than those which this *writer* has made *conclusive* in his answer. They must shew us *how* and *when* infants were excluded from being sharers in the benefits of the *new covenant*, and for what reason the *free*, the *universal* good-will of God, has denied our *infant*, *mortal* offspring a claim, as *legatees* to the gift of life; or why we should not, by that *symbol of purity* water-baptism, acknowledge them as the offspring of God, made in his *image*, and design'd for *ends* worthy of the infinitely wise former.

It will not be sufficient to tell us, that we may do this by *praying* for our children; this a *Jew*, this a *Turk*, this an *Heathen* could do; but as the *wisdom of God*, has seen it fit to have the *infant* offspring of his covenanting people, own'd together with their parents, by some *external rite*, as his *care* and *tender charge*; so we think that the *baptismal rite* applied to our *infant* offspring, does fitly assert the *extent* of the *redeemer's dominion* over them, and that there is not any thing in the new testament writings that does forbid our thus *bringing them* to him. The demands here made upon the *Antipædobaptists*, appear to us reasonable, and do conclude THE CHALLENGE.

I shall by way of *postscript* offer a few remarks in support of our practice of baptizing infants by sprinkling.

T H E

T H E

P O S T S C R I P T.

TH E learned Dr. Gale, has I find laid great stress upon the word βαπτίζω, as signifying a *total immersion*, or *plunging* in water, when used in a *sacramental sense**. But surely all the force of the *Doctor's* argument is gone, if it appears, that the *most sacred use* that the *Jews* ever made of water, was by *sprinkling*, *pouring*, or a *partial* application of it——which I hope has been sufficiently shewn——

The *Doctor* has dwelt much on the application of *water* among the *Jews*. The *vast brazen sea*, he particularly mentions, 2 *Chron.* iv. 6. “ which held 200 *baths*, i. e. near 1000 “ barrels of water——the bulk of which, he “ says, argues *that the priests were to go into it*. “ The words express it also, *the sea was for “ the priests to wash in*. So again, in another “ instance, *Exod.* xxix. 4. concerning the consecration of the priests, which *Jonathan* renders *Tabal*, *thou shalt dip them in 40 measures “ of spring water*||.

It is certain that the laver of brass to wash withal, which *Moses* is appointed to make, *Ex.* xxx. 18, 19, 20. at which *Aaron* and his sons were to wash, has a word *rachatz*, as *Walker* has observed† which properly signifies, *ablution*

* See his reflections on *Wall's history*, &c. p. 173, et alibi.
 || P. 156.

† See his *doctrine of baptisms*, p. 47.

and not *immersion* ——— And that *Moses* and *Aaron* and his sons washed their hands and feet *thereat*———See *Exod.* xl. 30, 31. not *therein* but *thereat*.———And so *Pool* has remark'd on *Exod.* xxx. 18. from *Munster* and *Fagius*, that it had many *spouts* and *pipes*, by which water was let out for their use. *Fistulas multas habebat, per quas emittebatur aqua.* And that it was to wash the priests and the parts of the sacrifices or victims; *ad lavandum.] et sacerdotes, et partes victimarum.* A custom which the very heathens had, of placing a laver before their temples, *Cincius dicebat delubrum esse locum ante templum, ubi aqua currit à diluendo**.

But it seems this *vast brazen sea* was for the priests to *plunge* in———But by *what authority?* why the text only says, *Exod.* xxx. 19. that *Aaron* and his sons, were to wash their *hands* and *feet* *thereat*———Nevertheless, for no other reason, but because *Solomon* had made a *more magnificent laver*, therefore the priests were to plunge in it——The *much water* had produc'd this idea in the *Doctor*, tho' without the least warrant from the *Mosaic-law*.

But with impropriety is this supposition made; forasmuch as it appears, that they were very exact about the *cleanness* and *purity* of the water, with which they washed—we should not therefore suppose that the priests plunged themselves together, or one after another in the same collection of water———or that 1000 barrels were thrown off, every time that any one had

* *Poli synop.* in loc.

washed in the sea. It is much more probable that that sea had *cocks* or *spouts* to it, at which the priests washed their hands and their feet, when they went to sacrifice— most likely that this must be the case, as they then washed with the water *running* out of the sea, or laver upon them.

The *Doct̃or* to support his cause, brings in *Jonathan's* rendring of the word, *Exod. xxix. 4.* with this comment, *viz. thou shalt DIP them in 40 measures of spring water.*

It is evident that *Rabbinical* writers are held in great contempt, when they say any thing against *plunging*, or for *infants baptism*||— but they have their weight, when they have given *cross comments*, or such as will suit the cause.

But tho' *Jonathan* should be right, in rendring the word, *tabal*——*Walker* has shewn it to signify a *partial application*, as dipping the finger in oyl, *Lev. iv. 16, 17*——and not to imply *immersion*, or a *total plunging**.

But if *Jonathan* must be understood of *plunging them in 40 measures of spring-water*, then we are to conclude also, that the priests were to be plunged in *Solomon's brazen sea*, which held near 1000 barrels of water.

And yet, *two* objections lie against this, besides there being no authority for it, *viz. first*, the inconvenience of plunging them in water five *cubits* high. It was too deep for any man of ordinary size to plunge in, unless he could swim: it seems not of a proper depth for a total *immersion* of the priests, every time they went to sacrifice.

|| See page 157 of his reflections. * P. 49 doctrine of baptisms.

And another objection is, it was placed too much in view of the *Jewish people*, to be made use of in this *bathing-way* by the priests,——to suppose that they did *not plunge*, much better agrees with the laws, which requir'd the priest to be careful about *covering his nakedness*, *Exod. xx. 26. xxviii. 42.*——and could never intend their bathing, or immersing their whole bodies in it, or *even* their hands and feet *in it*, but *at it*—They served in the temple with their hands and feet *bare*; and therefore the *laver* was provided for their cleansing.

Thus it manifestly appears, that even Dr. *Gale's* notion of the word *tabal*, as signifying a *total immersion*, in a *sacramental* sense, has nothing to support it—since most, if not all the purifications by water, both of *priests* and *people*, were by a different application of it.

I might, *as a conclusion*, take notice of one more passage in the *ANSWER*, which is in p. 27. where it is ask'd, "*whence sprung infant baptism? this must certainly be some innovation crept into the church, unknown to the scriptures.*"

That is to say, because the *first converts* to christianity must have been *adult persons*, and admitted by baptism, therefore the *infants* of such converts must be excluded, or denied any such rite of initiation.

But we turn the tables upon this writer, and say, whence came it about that infants were excluded an *initiating rite* with their parents? This is contrary to the divine appointment and custom of the *Patriarchal* and *Jewish* dispensations;

fations, and to the laudable custom that all civilized nations have had of dedicating their infant-offspring to the deity. *It must be therefore some innovation crept into the church, which denies the infant right, and wholly unknown to the scriptures*——they, we are sure, countenance no such exclusion; but contrarywise give all proper encouragment to the bringing our infants to *Jesus*, and solemnly putting them under his care and protection.

But this *writer*, it seems, has a very clear knowledge of the beginning of *adult baptism*, tho' he is quite ignorant of the rise of infant baptism. "*We well know the beginning of adult baptism.*" p. 27.

I much question whether he does well know this—since the *Jewish* method of admitting proselytes, in every age of their theocracy, must have been by baptism: as appears from the very face of their law, which made the *water of separation*, the *water of sprinkling*, or the *sacramental water*, indispensably requisite to the purifying of the *unclean* among the native *Jews*.—And it is undeniably plain, that they were to esteem all *aliens*, i. e. people of other nations, *unclean*, see *Josh. xxii. 19.* if the land of your possession be *unclean*.——likewise *Ezra* who greatly laments their making themselves *unclean* by mingling the holy seed, with the people of the lands, *ch. ix. 2, 11, 12.*

The *water of sprinkling*, would then be requisite, in order to cleanse and purify all such from among the strange nations, whom they had continued among them.—Which was a proper
adult

adult baptism.——But who was the first subject of *adult baptism*, or when it first came in use, I fancy this writer is not so sure of——and if not, he is *over confident*, when he says, *we well know the beginning of adult-baptism.*

I take the liberty of telling him, that for any thing, either he, or any defender of adult baptism has yet done, *infant baptism* seems to be of as ancient a date as *adult-baptism*——and in his own language, “ *I can assure him, that he may* “ *tire himself with his searches as long as he* “ *pleases, but if he continues to deny infants a* “ *right to baptism; or if he denies a* *partial* “ *application of water to be a proper baptism,* “ *he will have no warrant for such denials,* “ *better than his own imagination; for he will* “ *find nothing like a visible warrant, either from* “ *the old or the new testament||.* ”

Nor should any man object to *christian baptism*, because the *Jews* had *water baptisms* from the beginning of their polity——our esteem of the *rite* should not on this account be abated any more than for the *new covenant's* being made to *Abraham*——The *antiquity* of it should give us no offence; but the *clear publication* of it should be own'd as matter of everlasting thankfulness and joy.

I have added this *Postscript* to shew, that so great a modern as Dr. Gale, took refuge in the *usage of water* among the *Jews*, in order to support his notion of baptism. And the same has been generally, if not always done; if then it shall appear, that the most sacred use of water, among the *Jews*, was by sprinkling or pouring
and

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and not by plunging, then it must follow, that the *old testament* is fully on our side, as to the *sacramental* sense of *baptism*.

So that could it be proved, that immediately after the apostolic age, they *dipped* or *plunged* in their baptisms, it will conclude nothing more than this, *viz.* that men were fond of their own inventions, and made bold to alter the mode of this rite, as the mode of receiving the supper, which was instituted in a *reclining* posture, was soon altered also——The *addition* of more water is likely to have taken place early, from the strong inclination men had of making improvements in the services of religion.

And yet, for my own part, I am fully persuaded that the *mode* is no more essential to the institution of *baptism*, than the receiving of the bread and wine in the *Eucharist* is rather to be in a *sitting*, *standing*, or *kneeling*, than a *reclining* posture. Nor can I see, that christians have a right, in either case, to make the *MODE*, a *term of church communion*.

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FINIS